Core Knowledge® In Your State

# The Story of Minnesota

Reader

## THIS BOOK IS THE PROPERTY OF:

STATE _____

PROVINCE _____

COUNTY _____

PARISH _____

SCHOOL DISTRICT _____

OTHER _____

Book No. _____

Enter information in spaces to the left as instructed.

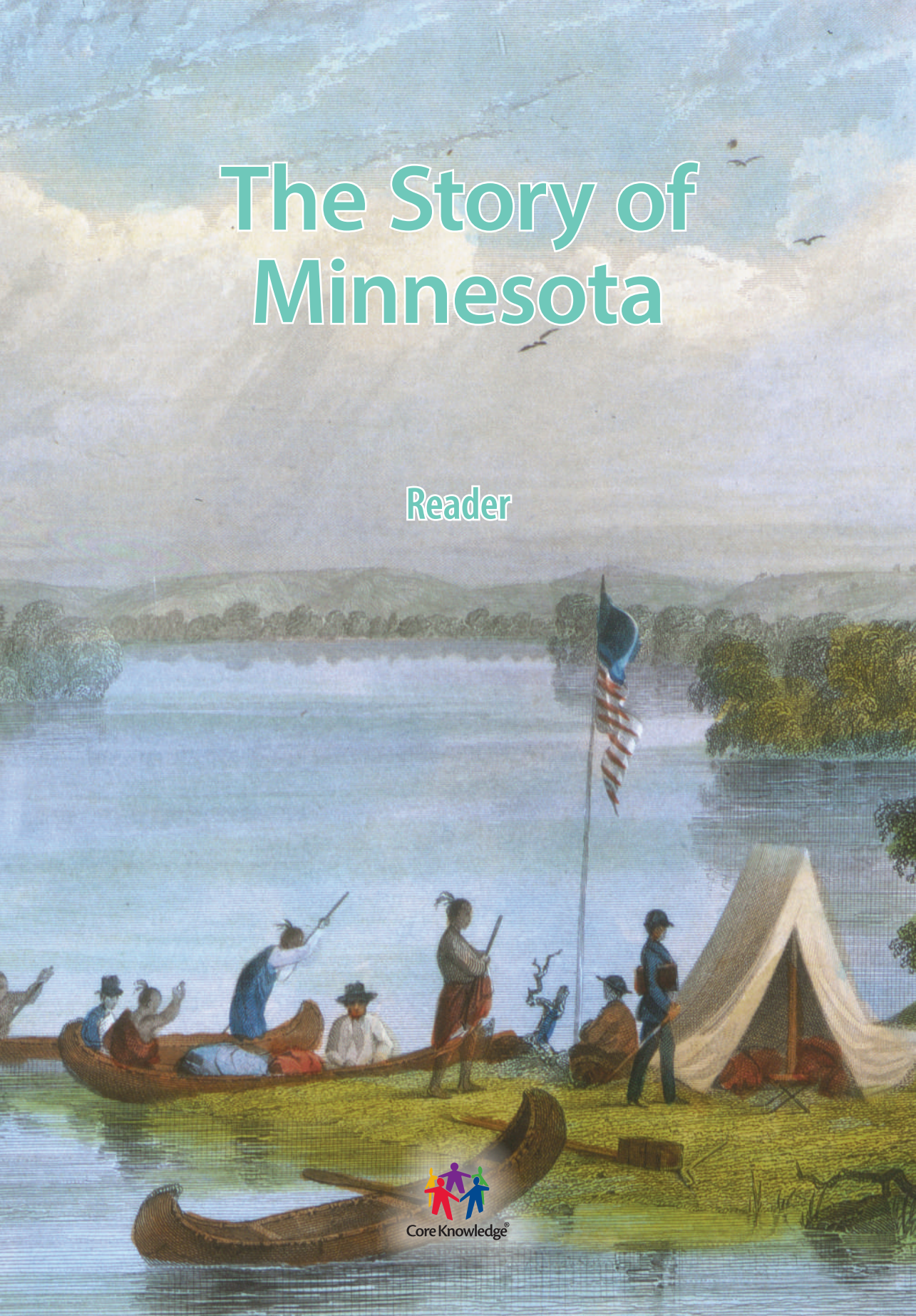
| ISSUED TO | Year Used | CONDITION | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | ISSUED | RETURNED |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

PUPILS to whom this textbook is issued must not write on any page or mark any part of it in any way, consumable textbooks excepted.

1. Teachers should see that the pupil's name is clearly written in ink in the spaces above in every book issued.
2. The following terms should be used in recording the condition of the book: New; Good; Fair; Poor; Bad.

# The Story of Minnesota

## Reader



Core Knowledge®

ISBN: 979-8-88970-493-5

# The Story of Minnesota

## Table of Contents


| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Chapter 1 | **A Place Called Minnesota** | 2 |
| Chapter 2 | **The First Peoples of Minnesota** | 18 |
| Chapter 3 | **Europeans Come to Minnesota** | 30 |
| Chapter 4 | **Minnesota Joins the United States** | 40 |
| Chapter 5 | **Minnesota and the Civil War** | 52 |
| Chapter 6 | **The U.S.-Dakota War** | 64 |
| Chapter 7 | **An Era of Growth and Change** | 76 |
| Chapter 8 | **Fighting for Freedom** | 92 |
| Chapter 9 | **Minnesota in the Twenty-First Century** | 110 |
| Chapter 10 | **Minnesota's Governments** | 122 |
| Chapter 11 | **Minnesota's Economy** | 138 |
| Glossary | | 148 |


# The Story of Minnesota

## Reader

Core Knowledge In Your State™

# Chapter 1
# A Place Called Minnesota

**Big Question**

What are the land and culture of Minnesota like?

**The Land of Lakes** From dense forests to open plains, and from dry land to over ten thousand lakes, Minnesota is a place with varied geography and great natural beauty. For thousands of years, the challenges and opportunities of this landscape have helped define how and where Minnesota's people live and work. It has also helped define the culture of the state's **inhabitants**, including how they see themselves and the world.

**Vocabulary**

**inhabitant**, n. a person who lives in a place

Once, Minnesota's ancient peoples used the lakes, rivers, and waterways of the state to get around. They made canoes from tree bark and wove fishing nets to catch sturgeon and trout to eat. Some of these practices are still around today, but the state is now crisscrossed by roads and railway lines, and many people live and work in bustling cities. The story of Minnesota is a story of ever-changing ways of life, and geography has always been at the heart of the tale.

Many of Minnesota's more than fourteen thousand lakes are in this federally protected area along the Canadian border called the Boundary Waters Canoe Area.

## Where Is Minnesota?

Minnesota is the northernmost state in the **contiguous** United States. These are the forty-eight states that make up the U.S. mainland, all of the United States except Alaska, Hawai'i, and U.S. territories. Minnesota shares its borders with four other contiguous states: Iowa to the south, North and South Dakota to the west, and Wisconsin to the east. Minnesota is also one of four states that border Lake Superior, one of the five Great Lakes. Lake Superior is the largest freshwater lake in the world. It is 350 miles (563 km) long and 160 miles (258 km) wide at its widest point.

**Vocabulary**

**contiguous**, adj. sharing a common border; next to each other

**Minnesota and Surrounding Locations**


**Minnesota is bordered by several states as well as Canada and Lake Superior.**

Canada sits to Minnesota's north. A small piece of Minnesota juts into Canada. It's called the Northwest Angle, and it is surrounded on all sides by either water or Canadian territory. Residents of the Northwest Angle live in the United States, but they must travel through Canada to get home from other parts of Minnesota. In the winter, residents and visitors can take a snowmobile across Lake of the Woods to get to and from the Northwest Angle. In the summer, they can take a boat or fly on a special plane that can land on open water.

## Minnesota's Physical Geography

One defining feature of Minnesota's geography is its lakes. Lakes are large, inland bodies of standing water. Smaller bodies of inland standing water are called ponds. The state has over fourteen thousand lakes, although the number varies depending on how lakes are defined and counted. These lakes are sources of fresh water, drinkable water with a low salt content. They have provided Minnesota's people with water for drinking, washing, and bathing for thousands of years. Additionally, the lakes and rivers have been used as a reliable form of transportation for as long as people have lived here. After Lake Superior, the largest lake in Minnesota is Red Lake, which covers 288,800 acres (1,168 sq km) in the north of the state. The next largest is Mille Lacs Lake, covering 132,516 acres (536 sq km) in eastern Minnesota.

The reason Minnesota has so many freshwater lakes is that up until between eight thousand and ten thousand years ago, the state was covered in ice and **glaciers**. As these huge formations of ice

**Vocabulary**

**glacier**, n. a large, slow-moving mass of compacted snow or ice

gradually melted, they eroded the landscape and left behind rivers and lakes.

Across the state of Minnesota, people often need to travel around a lake to get where they need to be. The state is the twelfth largest in terms of area, but much of it is covered in water. The total surface area of all of Minnesota's lakes is almost as large as the entire state of Connecticut. Most of the lakes are located in the northern half of the state, but they can be found nearly anywhere. Only four of Minnesota's eighty-seven counties do not have a lake, and all four are in the southern part of the state.

Minnesota is also crossed by many rivers. Collectively, Minnesota's rivers run for 91,944 miles (147,969 km). Minnesota is also the starting point of one of America's great rivers. The Mississippi


**The source of the Mississippi River is in Lake Itasca.**

River, the second-longest river in the United States, begins at Lake Itasca in the north-central part of the state. From there, it flows more than 2,300 miles (3,701 km) to the Gulf of Mexico, passing through many other U.S. states. The Minnesota River, from which the state takes its name, flows 320 miles (515 km) from Big Stone Lake on the South Dakota border down to St. Paul, where it meets the Mississippi.

If you were to travel from the Northwest Angle at the top of the state to the border of Iowa at the bottom, you could pass through four distinctive **biomes**. Each biome has its own climate, terrain, plants, and animals. From the wetlands of Northern Minnesota to the plains of the south, you may even experience different seasons from the top of the state to the bottom as spring slowly makes its way north. Minnesota's biomes are the **prairie** grassland in the west and south of the state, aspen parkland in an area of the north and center, **coniferous** forest that covers the northeast of the state, and **deciduous** forest in the southeast and center.

**Vocabulary**

**biome**, n. an ecological community defined by plants, animals, and climate

**prairie**, n. a large area of flat land covered in grasses

**coniferous**, adj. relating to trees with needles and cones

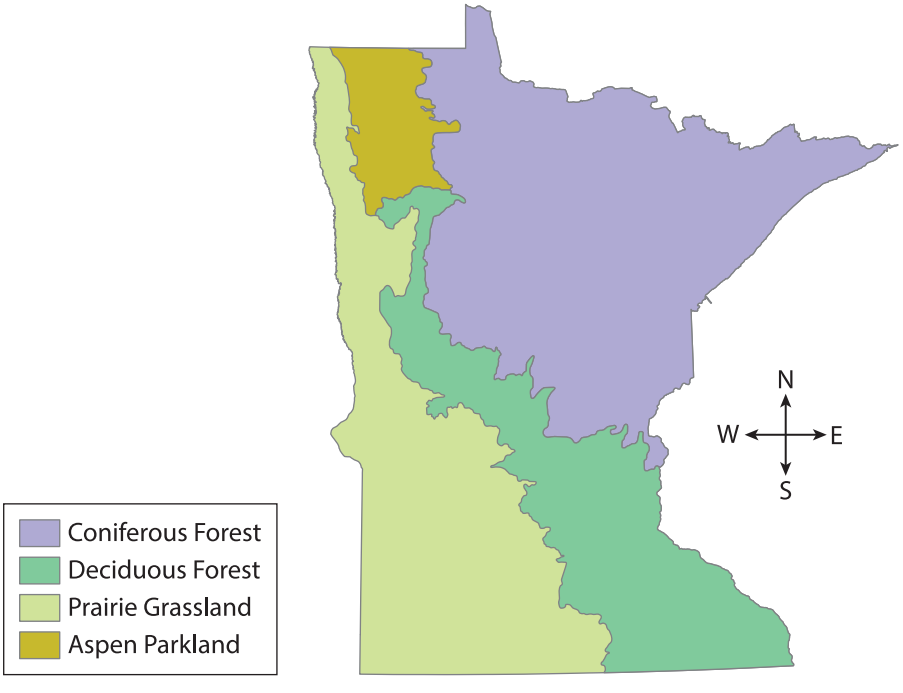
**deciduous**, adj. relating to trees that shed their leaves each year

The prairie grassland is an open area of relatively flat land covered mainly by low plants and grasses. Rainfall is usually less than in other biomes, and the climate tends to be dry. This is usually good land for raising cattle. In the past, herds

of American bison lived here. The aspen parkland, or tallgrass parkland, is a mix of prairie and wetlands (areas where there is much water, on the boundaries of lakes and rivers). It is a place where strong winds and cold winters are common. Cranes and other wetland birds, as well as large mammals like elk and bears, can be found here.

Coniferous forest is defined by conifers, evergreen trees with needles rather than leaves. Such trees in Minnesota include pines, firs, and spruce. This biome tends to be cool and wet. On the other hand, deciduous forest is defined by deciduous trees, which have leaves that fall in the autumn and regrow in the spring. Trees in this biome include sugar maples (from which maple sap can be extracted and made into maple sugar) and oaks.

**The Biomes of Minnesota**



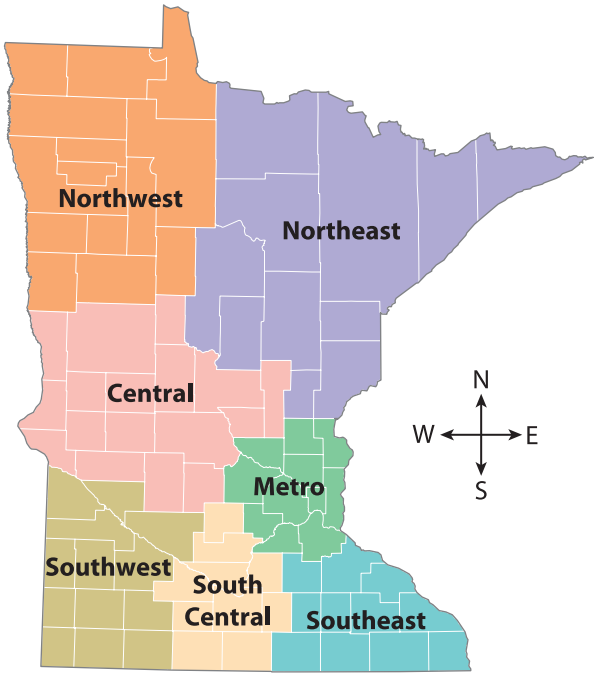

**If you were to travel through all of Minnesota's biomes in a single day, it might seem like traveling to another state. A coniferous forest and prairie grassland feel very different.**

## Minnesota's Regions and Resources

Minnesota is most often separated into seven geographical regions. Each region includes its own landscape, settlement pattern, and valuable natural resources.

For a long time, Minnesota's forests have been one of the state's most important natural resources. Timber and tree bark were used by Native peoples in several ways. They were burned for heat to cook food and to warm people in the winter. Timber and bark were also used to make boats and tools. In more modern times, the available timber in Minnesota's forests enabled the growth of the logging industry in the northern part of the state. Coniferous needleleaf trees, named for their sharp needles, grow along rivers, which is where the earliest logging took place.

**The Regions of Minnesota**




**Nearly 60 percent of Minnesota's population lives in the Twin Cities (Minneapolis and St. Paul) metropolitan area, labeled Metro on the map.**

The prairie land in the western and southern regions is now home to most of Minnesota's agricultural industry. This is because over time, the small plants and grasses of the prairie built the land into a rich soil filled with the nutrients necessary for farming. At roughly twenty-six million acres, Minnesota's farms make up more than half of its total land area. Those farms, raising everything from corn to cows, produce about $17 billion in sales every year.

One of Minnesota's most valuable natural resources is its minerals. The world's largest open-pit iron ore and taconite mine is in Hibbing, Minnesota. An open pit is a mine where the minerals or other desirable resources are close to the surface, so a large open-air mine is dug, rather than digging tunnels deep into the ground. At more than five thousand acres in size, this mine is a

**Open-pit mines, such as this iron mine in the town of Virginia, Minnesota, directly impact the environment by causing significant erosion.**

large part of Minnesota's mining industry. Minnesota produces more iron ore and taconite than any other state in the country. The Hibbing mine is eight miles wide at its largest point, earning it the nickname "Grand Canyon of the North." Demand for minerals from the Mesabi Range in northeast Minnesota peaked in World War II, when the demand for steel was high. The state has since mined all its high-grade iron ore. It still extracts taconite, an iron-rich sedimentary rock that can be made into steel.

Other natural resources are also pulled directly from the ground. Sand and gravel pits provide materials for concrete. Clay is molded and hardened to become bricks. Granite and limestone are used in construction. People also continue to hunt for minerals like diamonds and gold, but few have been found.

Minneapolis, the largest city in Minnesota, owes its founding to a powerful waterfall. Originally called Owámniyomni by the Dakota people, the waterfall, now also called St. Anthony Falls, provided one of the first power sources in Minnesota. It became the site of the world's largest flour mill and one of the first sites of modern industrial agriculture. In the nineteenth century, the villages of St. Anthony and Minneapolis grew near this site, until their growth caused them to merge and become the city of Minneapolis. Minneapolis and nearby St. Paul, known as the Twin Cities, are now the largest cities in Minnesota.

## People and the Environment

The natural resources of Minnesota have affected where people live and work for thousands of years. The very first to use the rich soil as

farmland were the state's first inhabitants, the Anishinaabe and the Dakota. That same land later attracted immigrants from Germany, Sweden, and Norway. Farmers in the past and now often change the land to accommodate crops. In some areas, such as around Minnesota's rivers and lakes, the land was too wet to support farming. In response, farmers built **drainage** systems to control the moisture of the land. In other, drier areas, such as the prairie grasslands, **irrigation** systems were built to ensure crops had enough water to live and grow.

**Vocabulary**

**drainage**, n. the removal of water from a place

**irrigation**, n. the watering of crops by moving water from a well, river, or lake to a place where it does not rain enough to grow crops

However, it was another key resource that attracted the very first European settlers to what is now Minnesota. The forests of Minnesota were rich with the kinds of light, strong wood most valued by loggers. The wood from Minnesota pines was strong enough to be used in construction but light enough to be easily transported. The forests were also located near rivers, so the harvested lumber could easily be moved from place to place. The first commercial sawmill in Minnesota was built in Marine on St. Croix, a small town on the state's eastern border. Bigger cities, such as Stillwater and Winona, were also founded because of riverside sawmills.

To power industry using water power, people modified the environment. At St. Anthony Falls, a series of tunnels were built in the middle of the nineteenth century to redirect water. This water was used to power nearby plants manufacturing flour, textiles, and other materials. Over time, the tunnels have weakened. After one

**Irrigation and drainage technologies support Minnesota's agriculture industry, which includes this farmland in the southern part of the state.**

tunnel collapsed, a protective covering was built beneath the falls to protect the tunnels from further damage.

As Minnesota's farms and mills grew, so did the need to move crops, lumber, flour, and textiles across the country and around the world. Beginning in 1823, steam-powered ships carried products, raw materials, and people up and down Minnesota's rivers. By the 1850s, the railroad was the primary mode of transportation. By the 1950s, roads and highways were becoming increasingly common ways to move goods.

Today, Minnesota's economy relies on more than the state's natural resources. Seventeen Fortune 500 companies—or the largest companies in the country—are headquartered in Minnesota. Most of them, including retailers like Target and Best Buy, are in the Twin Cities metropolitan area. The largest private company in the

country, Cargill, is also headquartered in the Twin Cities. On the other hand, major food producer Hormel Foods is in the southern part of the state in Austin, where it was founded. The Mayo Clinic, a top-ranked hospital that attracts patients from all over the world, is also in southern Minnesota.

## A Wealth of Cultures and Communities

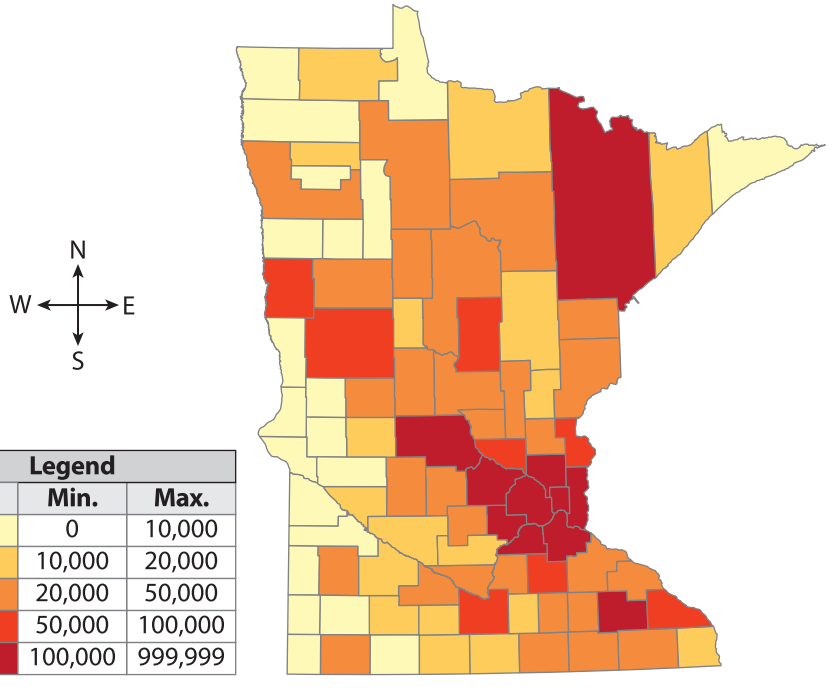
Many communities have called Minnesota home over the years, and many different people live in the state today. In 2020, the state's population was estimated to be about 5.7 million people. A majority of the state's modern population are white, at about 61.6 percent. Many of these people have ancestors who came to the United States and to Minnesota from northern Europe—countries such as England, Germany, Norway, and Sweden. The two largest other ethnic and racial identities are Black, at 12.4 percent of the population, and Hispanic, at 18.7 percent of the population. Six percent of


**This signpost in New Ulm showcases Minnesota's German heritage.**

the population have Asian ancestors and identities, and 10.2 percent report more than one ethnic and racial identity. Although once they lived in territories that spanned the state, Minnesota's Native American tribes, the Anishinaabe and Dakota, live on reservations in the state (seven for the Anishinaabe and four for the Dakota). As of 2018, about 1.1 percent of the state's population was Native American.

Minnesota is becoming more diverse over time. From 2010 to 2018, the percentage of Black people living in Minnesota grew by nearly 100,000 people. In the same period, the Asian population grew by nearly 70,000 people.

**Population Density of Minnesota**




| Legend | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Color** | **Min.** | **Max.** |
| | 0 | 10,000 |
| | 10,000 | 20,000 |
| | 20,000 | 50,000 |
| | 50,000 | 100,000 |
| | 100,000 | 999,999 |

**The total population of Minnesota in 2023 was 5,800,386, an increase of 1.6 percent since 2020.**

From the late twentieth century onward, much of Minnesota's population growth has come from immigration. Three immigrant groups in particular have contributed to this growth and are still growing today. Minnesota is home to the largest population of people from Somalia in the United States. Many of them fled the civil war in their home country in the 1990s. They have not had a recognized country since then. This means they came to Minnesota as **refugees**. The first Somalis who arrived in Minnesota found a place with a strong economy and a welcoming environment. This encouraged other Somalis, both from outside the United States and from within, to move to Minnesota to join the growing and thriving community.

**Vocabulary**

**refugee**, n. a person who has been forced to leave their country in order to escape war, persecution, or natural disaster

Minnesota is also home to the second-largest Hmong population in the United States. The Hmong come from Laos, a small country in southeast Asia. Most came to the United States in 1975 after the Vietnam War. Today, the Twin Cities are home to one of the nation's largest Hmong communities. Like their Somali counterparts, many Hmong came to Minnesota because of the state's economic opportunities and support services.

The largest group of new residents in the state comes from Mexico. As with many other immigrant groups, they came to the state because of problems at home. They also came in search of better jobs. Today, much of Minnesota's vital agricultural industry is made possible because of workers from Mexico.

Minnesota's diverse communities, big and small, have always played an important role in making the state a vibrant place to live. Today, the state's growing diversity indicates that people still believe that Minnesota is a place where people of many identities and backgrounds can live and work.

**These dancers, based in Minneapolis, put on displays celebrating Mexican heritage and culture.**

# Chapter 2
# The First Peoples of Minnesota

**Big Question**

Who were Minnesota's first peoples, and how did they live before European contact?

## Walking in Ancient Footsteps

As the sun sets in the southwest corner of the place that is now Minnesota, visitors witness a striking scene. More than five thousand ancient carvings come alive to tell the stories of people who lived in this place more than seven thousand years ago. These rock carvings in southwest Minnesota are some of the oldest of their kind in the Midwest. They tell a story of the people who lived in this place a long time ago.

Thousands of years later, new tribes emerged in this place. The artwork left behind by their ancestors was sacred to them and remains sacred to their descendants today.

The original inhabitants of Minnesota established rich cultures and societies. They hunted and explored, they modified the land, and they traded and fought with other peoples they encountered. Their

The markings in Comfrey, Minnesota, were first made seven thousand years ago, and people of the region have added to them over time. The most recent markings are 250 years old.

story is the story of Minnesota, as they have lived in the state for many, many generations. Even today, despite violence at the hands of settlers and the loss of their lands, these tribes still live in Minnesota. They have influenced the state's language and culture and continue to do so today.

## Minnesota's Earliest Inhabitants

People have lived in what is now Minnesota for more than eleven thousand years. A long time ago, people moved from Asia into what is now Alaska and Canada and then south into the rest of

**Early Interactions in Minnesota: 11,500 BCE to 1600 CE**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Paleoindian Period**<br>**11,500 to 8000 BCE** | Minnesota's first inhabitants migrated south from Canada. People lived in small groups in an environment of wetlands caused by melting glaciers. |
| **Archaic Period**<br>**8000 BCE to 500 BCE** | People spread across Minnesota after glaciers receded. Different groups adapted to their environment, farming along the Mississippi River in the southeast or hunting bison across the western Prairie. |
| **Woodland Period**<br>**500 BCE to 1000 CE** | Bows and arrows were used for hunting in Minnesota for the first time, and people began to grow corn, squash, and beans. Bison were hunted for meat and materials. |
| **Late Prehistoric**<br>**1000 to 1600 CE** | Ancestors of the Dakota arrived in Minnesota around the year 1000 CE. Anishinaabe people arrived soon after. |

**A variety of peoples with distinct cultures have lived in Minnesota. Their history spans thousands of years before the first Europeans arrived.**

North America. At the time, most of Minnesota was covered in glacial ice. When the glaciers started to melt, early humans began to move to Minnesota. We do not know what names these people gave themselves. Historians call them Paleoindians. While very little evidence of them remains in Minnesota, archaeologists have found some evidence of early tools. They have also found some human fossils. The skeleton of "Browns Valley Man" was discovered in a gravel pit in western Minnesota in 1933. It is one of the oldest ever found in North America. These earliest humans struggled against the flooding and other challenges of melting glaciers. They were some of the first humans to hunt big game, including the bison that would come to dominate the landscape of the Great Plains.

About the year 8000 BCE, humans in what is now Minnesota entered what archaeologists call the Archaic period. During this time, the glaciers continued to melt and grasslands that were more suitable to human life grew strong. In fact, nearly the entire state was covered by prairie grasses by roughly 5000 BCE. Shallow lakes dried up in summer, and some forests disappeared. At this time, people used copper to make tools for hunting animals like bison.

The Archaic period was followed by the Woodland period, a time of great innovation about 2,500 years ago. During this period, humans became more sophisticated, from their day-to-day life to their spiritual practices. The bow and arrow first appeared, and humans started to farm crops such as corn, squash, and beans. Bison were still the most important game to hunt, and humans became more skilled at tracking the large animals from prairie to woodlands. This period is also when foods such as wild rice and maple syrup emerged. In all parts of what is now Minnesota,

**These burial mounds, some of the oldest human-made structures in Minnesota, are found at Indian Mounds Park in St. Paul.**

humans of this period buried their dead in mounds. Burial mounds have been found in almost every part of Minnesota.

Perhaps the best evidence of early humans in Minnesota are the Jeffers **Petroglyphs** in southern Minnesota. These rock carvings are more recent but still date as far back as 5000 BCE. They show important events of this time period. They also show the myths and other stories that were important to those early people. The more than five thousand images at the site show early hunting tools, such as atlatls, or throwing sticks. The carvings also show what the earliest humans hunted, including bison. For the people who live in Minnesota with a direct connection to these ancient peoples, the carvings are especially important. It is a **sacred** place where people feel a connection to the land and to those who came before.

**Vocabulary**

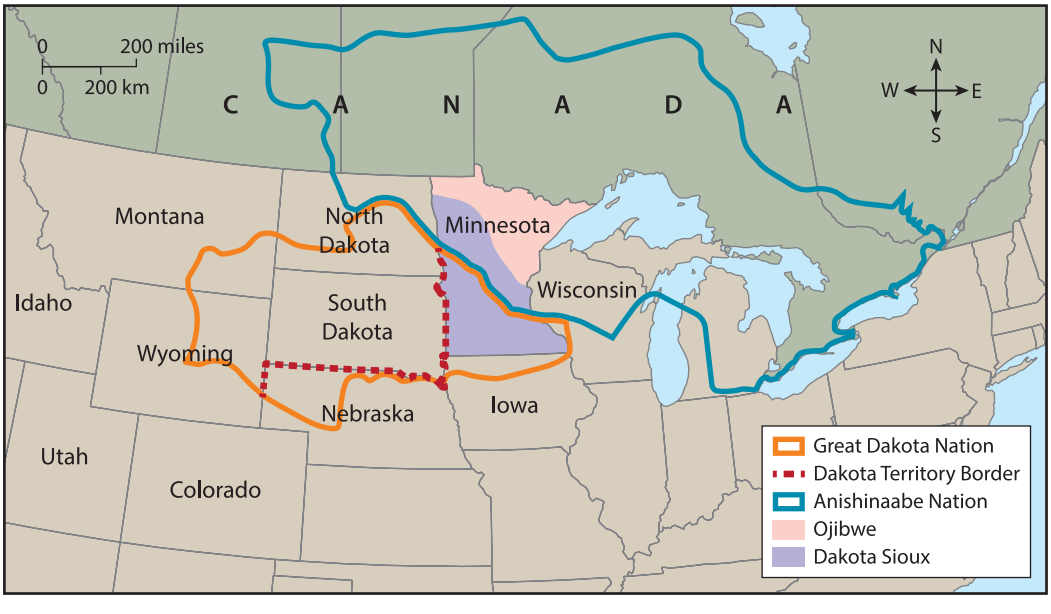
**petroglyph**, n. a prehistoric rock carving

**sacred**, adj. related to religion; holy

## The Dakota and the Anishinaabe

The Dakota people have called what is now Minnesota their home since at least the year 1000 CE. But their creation story tells of all life beginning at the point where the rivers now called the Minnesota and the Mississippi meet. The Dakota call this location Bdote. By the year 1750 CE, the Dakota were joined in Minnesota by another people, the Anishinaabe. The Anishinaabe tribe is also sometimes called Ojibwe the name other tribes use for them, rather than the name the Anishinaabe use for themselves. The Anishinaabe journeyed to Minnesota by following rivers inland from the Atlantic coast, where they had previously lived for more than two thousand years. This journey of the Anishinaabe to northern Minnesota took place over hundreds of years.

**Ancestral Lands of the Dakota and Anishinaabe**




**The two main Indigenous nations in Minnesota are the Dakota and the Anishinaabe. The Dakota initially occupied more land, but the Anishinaabe pushed them south when they arrived in Minnesota.**

**Anishinaabe canoes made from birch bark helped them navigate waters like this lake in Bemidji for thousands of years.**

The Dakota and Anishinaabe made use of the land and the resources it provided. But owning a piece of land was a foreign concept to them. As such, they did not work against the land to shape it, but rather worked with the land as it existed. This means that they tended not to dig irrigation ditches or make other modifications to the landscape. The Dakota migrated with the seasons. In the summer, they fished, farmed, and preserved food. In the fall, they moved to the place where they would stay for the long winter, typically a place where they would find bison to sustain them for the cold months ahead.

The Anishinaabe people traditionally traveled along rivers, just as they had on their journey to Minnesota. They made canoes from the bark of birch trees and moved over rivers together in clans. They harvested wild rice, or manoomin, from rivers and lakes, especially those in protected back channels. They also hunted, fished, and harvested maple sugar and syrup.

## The Culture and Traditions of the Dakota

Dakota tradition is a deep and important part of Minnesota's history. The very name of the state comes from the Dakota language. *Mni Sota Makoce* translates to "Land where the waters are so clear they reflect the clouds." This is the place where the Dakota people's ancestors played as children. Modern Dakota people still have a close connection to this place.


**In 2024, Minnesota updated its official state seal to include the Dakota people's name for this place, Mni Sota Makoce.**

Storytelling is essential to the Dakota people's efforts to keep their centuries of traditions alive. Their stories tell of past events, but they also teach lessons and explain why things are the way they are. Stories help to bring generations of people together.

Historically, Dakota communities were run collectively, with no single person making all the decisions. **Kinship**, or close blood relationship, is also a major part of Dakota culture. Dakota people kept track of kin and relations spread out across the land. They took pride in both recognizing and treating as family those kin they came across and also welcoming new members of their families into their kinship network. Kinship networks meant that the Dakota could rely on members of their tribe for help, even when traveling long distances within their territory.

**Vocabulary**

**kinship**, n. close blood relationship

**Pipes are an important part of Dakota spiritual practices.**

Spirituality was—and still is—at the heart of Dakota culture. Dakota spirituality centers on the Creator, a powerful and

sacred presence that is part of everything. People are connected to the Creator, but so are animals, the land, and everything that comes from it. Dakota spirituality celebrates Mother Earth as a living being and see humans as her caretakers. One way in which the Dakota people make this connection to Creator and Mother Earth is through a pipe ceremony. In Dakota religion, much like in daily life, their power comes from the collective, not from the individual.

## The Culture and Traditions of the Anishinaabe

The Anishinaabe are one of the largest tribes in North America. Their name translates to "original people."

**Laws in Minnesota protect the Anishinaabe tradition of harvesting wild rice. It is illegal for anyone to remove wild rice from a reservation except for the people who live there.**

Historically, the Anishinaabe people relied heavily on what the land could provide them. They moved between homes with the seasons. Their birch bark canoes helped them cultivate wild rice from the lakes and rivers, a practice still performed and protected today.

Generosity and community are also central to the lives of the Anishinaabe culture. Gift-giving is especially important and often ceremonial. People show their kinship by giving gifts back and forth to one other. The gift-giving culture also led to beautiful artistry. Anishinaabe artwork adorns everything from their canoes to their baskets and boxes.

Oral traditions and a deep connection to place are central to the Anishinaabe tradition and culture as well. Oral traditions are the stories and songs that are passed down through the generations by speaking and performing them. They are a way for societies to transmit their history and their culture from generation to generation even if nothing is written down.

**This beaded Anishinaabe bag features a red thunderbird, a powerful spiritual presence believed to protect the Anishinaabe people.**

Anishinaabe religious beliefs are less about the community and more about the individual than Dakota beliefs. Still, Anishinaabe religion describes a spirit world filled with all things, including all animals

and the land itself. Everything has a spirit, including the rocks and the trees. Humans also have guardian spirits, who offer protection and guidance. As with the Dakota, people can come into closer contact with these spirits through personal prayer and the use of sacred tobacco.

## Indigenous Interactions

Indigenous people across North America established extensive trade networks well before any Europeans arrived on their land. Goods and ideas traveled hundreds of miles. The Dakota and Anishinaabe were especially good fur trappers, and they traded their furs around the Great Lakes region.

With their longer history in the region, the Dakota were more skilled at living among herds of elk and bison. They hunted these animals and used their furs and bones to make clothing and tools, and the meat was a major source of food for the tribe. But the Anishinaabe were more skilled at trapping smaller animals, a skill that would help them eventually dominate the local fur-trapping industry.

Because they lived so close to each other, the two nations occasionally came into conflict. When the Anishinaabe first arrived in what is now Minnesota, they encountered the Dakota. They fought over land, especially the headwaters of the Mississippi River and the western side of Lake Superior.

But these conflicts were resolved, and many years of peace followed between the two nations. They formed an alliance in

1679 that gave the Dakota many of the fur goods they needed and provided the Anishinaabe people with more land. This peaceful season lasted nearly sixty years. The tribes hunted together, shared religious practices, and even blended families. For both tribes, the place where the Mississippi and Minnesota Rivers came together was the center of both diplomacy and trade.

**Pre-European Trade of Copper**


**The copper trade is just one example of the far-reaching trade networks among Indigenous nations before Europeans arrived.**

# Chapter 3
# Europeans Come to Minnesota

**"L'etoile du Nord"** Early Europeans in Minnesota did not plan to stay there. They came from the northeast or the far north, searching for fortune in the shape of beavers and other small animals. Others were searching for a route from one ocean to another. Few saw this place, with its long, harsh winters, as a permanent home.

**Big Question**

How did Minnesota change with the arrival of European traders and settlers?

When explorers first arrived, they encountered miles of deep forests. They met nations of people who had been living on the land for centuries. Eventually, many Europeans did make this place their home. These settlers worked with and against the land and the people who were already here to establish permanent settlements for themselves.

The fur trade brought many Europeans to what is now Minnesota. Today, many of the species of animals that they sought are endangered, and some no longer exist in Minnesota at all.

## The French Arrive in Minnesota

The first Europeans to arrive in Minnesota traveled south from what is now Canada. In the 1600s, French explorers were searching for the Northwest Passage, a northern water route from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean. A group of French fur traders landed in Minnesota after traveling across Lake Superior. They had to **portage** into Minnesota, or carry their canoes across the land. The land they found was populated almost exclusively by the Anishinaabe people, who had arrived by a similar route centuries before. The traders did not see the land as the Anishinaabe and Dakota did. They viewed it as a thing that could be owned, and they saw great opportunities to enrich themselves by exploiting the land and its resources.

**Vocabulary**

**portage**, v. to carry a boat and its cargo from one navigable waterway to another

The small settlement that the traders built became the first European settlement in Minnesota. It grew to become the center of an enormous fur-trading network called Grand Portage. The network stretched roughly 3,000 miles (4,828 km), into and across eastern Canada. Well into the eighteenth century, the area was the headquarters for some of the most influential and profitable companies of the time.

Among the first fur traders to set foot in what is now Minnesota was Étienne Brûlé. In about 1620, he became the first European to see Lake Superior. He got to know the Indigenous people who were already living in what is now Canada. He became one of the

first French language interpreters to establish communication with the tribes. Later that same century, an explorer named Médard Chouart des Groseilliers is believed to be the first European to enter Minnesota from what is now Wisconsin. He explored much of Lake Superior and Minnesota with his brother-in-law, Pierre-Esprit Radisson. Radisson interacted a great deal with Minnesota's Indigenous peoples. He spent six weeks with the Dakota. During that time, he recorded their rituals and ceremonies. His journal became one of the first written accounts of the Dakota people and their customs.

The two brothers-in-law also established the Hudson's Bay Company, a **prominent** fur-trading business, in 1670. The company was headquartered in London, but it became central to European settlement of North America. The two explorers claimed many areas that would become centers of commerce in the fur trade. The Hudson's Bay Company still exists today, with stores throughout the United States and Canada.

**Vocabulary**

**prominent**, adj. very important; famous

While fur traders were central to European exploration of Minnesota, they were not the only explorers. In 1675, the French sent a priest named Father Louis Hennepin to explore what the French called New France. He tried to find the source of the Mississippi River. He was also the first European to discover the only waterfall on that river, located in present-day Minneapolis. The Dakota called the waterfall Owámniyomni, which means turbulent water. Hennepin renamed it St. Anthony Falls.


**Father Hennepin renamed the Owámniyomni waterfall in Minneapolis and explored much of North America. He created this map in 1698.**

Another priest sent by the French to explore this land was Pierre-Charles Le Sueur. He arrived in Minnesota by traveling north up the Mississippi and Minnesota Rivers.

Throughout these early years of exploration, some French explorers established good relationships with Indigenous peoples, including the Dakota. The fur trade that would become so important to this area relied on cooperation with Indigenous nations. At the time, the Dakota and the Anishinaabe held all the power in the region. They understood the land and were expert trappers. The Anishinaabe in the north were especially

influential on the French explorers. The French adopted many Native customs and did their best to assimilate. In turn, Indigenous peoples brought the French into their own cultures and even into their families. While some Indigenous people converted to Catholicism, the French did not force conversion as other Europeans did. While their fundamentally different ways of viewing the land would later cause conflict, the two sides were able to live peacefully during these early days.

## Voyageurs and the Fur Trade

Europeans strongly desired fur as a material for clothing and hats. Furs were warm and soft, and because they came from remote areas, they were fashionable and exotic. The fur of animals from North America, such as beavers, fetched a high price. Trappers had exhausted the supply of beaver pelts in the northeast and needed to move west to find more of this valuable resource.

In 1679, representatives of the French government visited the Dakota near what is now called Lake Mille Lacs. At that meeting, the Anishinaabe and Dakota renewed their agreement to trade with each other and with the French. The Dakota also agreed to give land to the Anishinaabe, who would become middlemen with the

**Trade between French fur trappers and peoples such as the Dakota and Anishinaabe helped merge their cultures in some ways. This bag was made by Native people but now typically goes by its French name, a parfleche.**

French trappers. This arrangement would ultimately push the Dakota people further off their land.

Alliances with Native Americans gave French traders the ability to set up trade routes throughout what is now Minnesota. Those routes went through land that used to be Dakota territory, including what is now the St. Croix River Basin. French traders also established trapping and trade routes along what is now called the St. Louis River and along the Savannah Portage in present-day McGregor, Minnesota.

At the heart of the profitable fur trade were the Voyageurs, the French word for travelers. Most were French-Canadians, working fourteen-hour days to transport fur goods among the trading posts that were hundreds or even thousands of miles apart. They paddled with incredible strength, and they each carried several hundred pounds in the forms of packs and canoes during dozens

**Voyageurs rowed and portaged canoes across Minnesota and parts of Canada.**

of miles-long portages. Later, many Voyageurs hunted, trapped, and traded directly with Indigenous people.

Thanks to the knowledge and skills of Indigenous nations and the hard work of the Voyageurs, Minnesota's fur industry became a large and important one. It provided the Dakota and Anishinaabe with security, though that would not last. It also led to the establishment of more permanent settlements in Minnesota.

## Expanding European Interest

By the end of the eighteenth century, the fur trappers were no longer the only explorers in Minnesota. But the **infrastructure** they built, such as roads and bridges, was becoming more permanent and more important. Grand Portage, a route that was likely used for centuries before Europeans arrived there, became even more important to the settlement of this region. By 1731, the French were using it as a route to the northern part of Canada. Later, the English used it as well, moving supplies and furs from one end to the other. The Grand Portage also furthered trade between Europeans and Indigenous peoples. Minnesota was quickly becoming a place of economic opportunity.

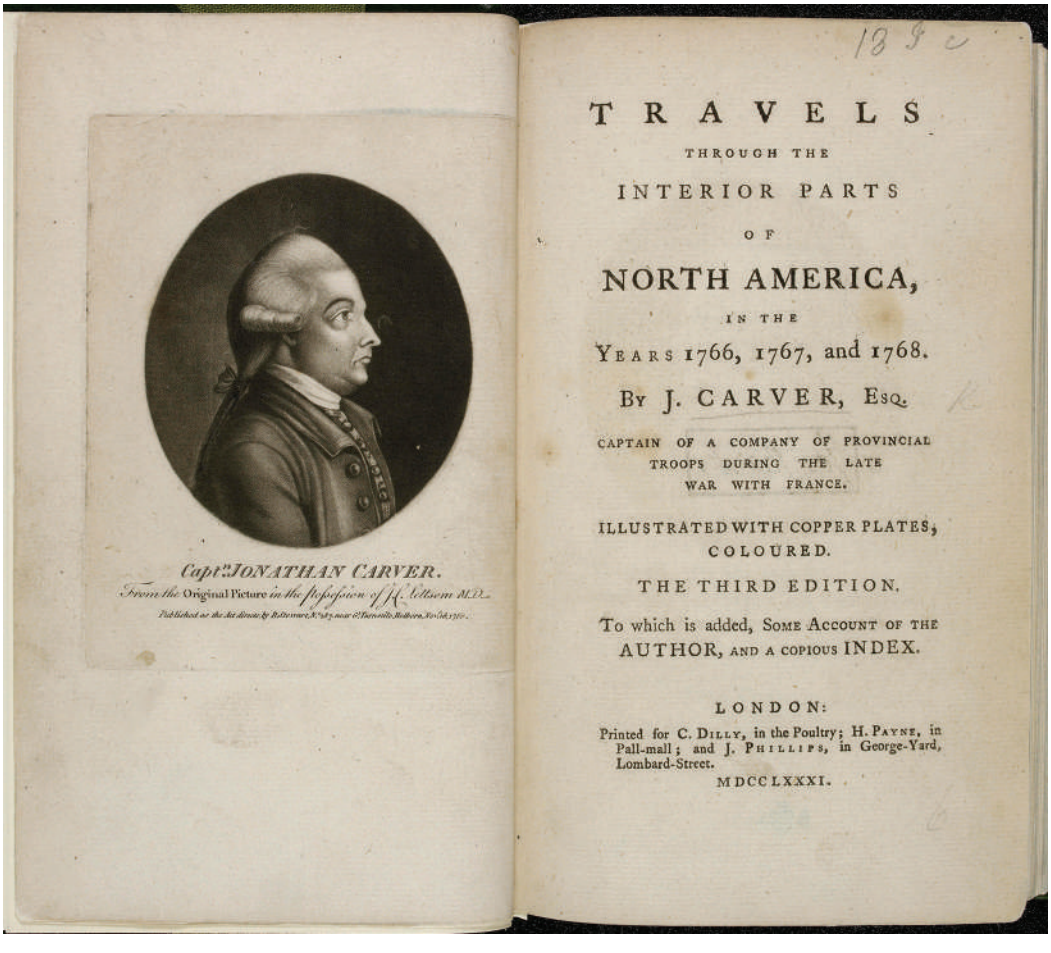
**Vocabulary**

**infrastructure**, n. the public works system that includes roads, bridges, water, public transportation, etc.

Interest in what is now Minnesota was also fueled by explorers such as David Thompson, a Canadian who mapped much of the area. Historians have called Thompson the greatest mapmaker who ever lived, in part because of the extensive and accurate maps of

North America that he created based on his life's travels. His maps placed the beginning of the Mississippi River at a lake in northern Minnesota, only a few miles off the actual location. His work also helped to expand the trade networks of the time.

Other early explorers included Jonathan Carver, who spent the winter of 1766–1767 with the Dakota people along what is now called the Minnesota River. Zebulon Pike, who explored the peaks of Colorado, journeyed through Minnesota in 1805. Pike had been sent to explore land that the United States had acquired in the




**Jonathan Carver wrote *Travels through the Interior Parts of North America*. Carver was one of the first Americans to explore and map parts of Minnesota. The book was first published in 1778.**

Louisiana Purchase. He and an expedition of U.S. soldiers explored the upper Mississippi River, mapping and cataloguing the places and things they found. He formed a friendship with Dakota chief Taoyateduta (Little Crow), who eventually turned over 100,000 acres (404.6 sq km) of his people's land to be used for American forts.

**Vocabulary**

**confluence**, n. a coming or flowing together

During his travels, Pike noted the strategic position of a bluff overlooking the **confluence** of the Mississippi and Minnesota Rivers. The land where the Mississippi and Minnesota Rivers meet has held spiritual and cultural significance for thousands of years. To the Dakota people, it is called Bdote, or "where two rivers come together." It is a sacred place where their oral tradition says life on Earth began. Above the rivers is a cave where Dakota women would come to give birth. In the same space, deceased family members were prepared for burial. By the year 1819, this site was home to an American fort, filled with soldiers. This was Fort St. Anthony, later renamed Fort Snelling. This change was just one of many that would follow for Minnesota and its people.

# Chapter 4
# Minnesota Joins the United States

**Big Question**

How did Minnesota become a U.S. state?

## From Wilderness to Statehood

When fur trappers first made their way across Lake Superior into what is now Minnesota, they could not have imagined the future they were helping to make. Over time, the fur trade led to something more. Routes used by trappers became roads. Trading posts of a few buildings became towns. Local knowledge originally gained from cooperation with the Anishinaabe and Dakota grew into a system of maps and routes, with places bearing English names rather than Native American ones. Increasing numbers of settlers brought U.S. forts and American troops. Minnesota's economy grew from one in which a small number of people hunted, trapped, and farmed to support themselves into one that could support the population of a new U.S. state.

Early settlers and explorers of Minnesota used rivers and lakes to make their way around the region. This image shows a scene at Lake Itsaca in 1853.

It took time, conflict, and a lot of effort to make Minnesota a U.S. state. This was not an easy task because the settlers who came to Minnesota soon found themselves in a conflict over land and resources with the Dakota and Anishinaabe. And the new industries and activities that supported the growing economy of Minnesota were not always a reliable source of wealth and prosperity. There were losers as well as winners in Minnesota's path to statehood.

## Britain, America, and the American Fur Company

The Anishinaabe and Dakota had shared their knowledge of fur trapping with the first European settlers in what is now Minnesota. By the end of the eighteenth century, those settlers had established a thriving fur-trapping industry. But the Indigenous peoples of the region were still at the heart of the fur trade. The French relied on them so much that they even embraced some of their customs. The Anishinaabe were especially influential. Some traders adopted their bartering customs and mirrored their style of diplomacy. In turn, the Anishinaabe aligned themselves with the French. They expanded their land into parts of what is now Wisconsin to trade for European goods such as metal tools and firearms.

Although Minnesota was far away from the events of the American Revolution, Minnesota's fur industry still felt their effects. The United States gained independence, but that did not mean that Britain **relinquished** control of all its North American territories. The British tried

**Vocabulary**

**relinquish**, v. to give up something voluntarily

to maintain their hold on the fur trade in the Upper Mississippi region. In 1804, the British North West Company established the Snake River Fur Post on Anishinaabe land. Now, several groups were trying to work together or compete: the Anishinaabe and the Dakota, the British, and the United States of America.

Attempts to control the fur trade only intensified in the 1800s. In fact, the fur trade helped lead to the War of 1812. The British still held land in Canada. They made agreements with the Dakota and Anishinaabe peoples living in what is now northern Minnesota in the hope that the Indigenous peoples would side with them against the United States. In the War of 1812, the Americans intended to take control of Canada from the British, which would also mean taking control of the fur trade. The Anishinaabe and Dakota tribes fought alongside the British against the United States in hopes of preventing the United States from taking their land and settling on it. In the end, neither the British nor the Americans clearly won the war. The Dakota and Anishinaabe, however, did not get what they wanted, either—an end to American expansion.

The War of 1812 helped to clarify the border between the United States and Canada. After the war, though, the struggle to control the fur trade continued. Despite the border's clarification, the United States still worried about the British **encroaching** on its territory. The fur trade was booming, and the U.S. government wanted to control it. Construction of Fort St. Anthony on the sacred Dakota land of Bdote began in 1819. The fort was completed in 1825 and

**Vocabulary**

**encroach**, v. to intrude on something that belongs to someone else

renamed Fort Snelling in honor of Colonel Josiah Snelling, who oversaw its construction.

The purpose of Fort Snelling was not only to keep the British away, but also to help secure Anishinaabe and Dakota land for American settlers.  Soldiers at Fort Snelling also worked to keep peace between the Anishinaabe and the Dakota so that both were more willing to take part in the profitable fur trade.

By 1823, the American Fur Company had established a presence of its own near the rivers. It controlled the fur trade in what is now Minnesota and traded from a post near Fort Snelling. Henry Hastings Sibley was a high-ranking official in the company and was responsible for trade with the Dakota. He would have an even greater impact on the Dakota people in the coming decades.

**John Casper Wilder painted *Fort Snelling at Bdote* around 1844. It shows remnants of Dakota dwellings on one bank of the river. The fort would become even more detrimental to the Dakota in the years to come.**

## Effects on Native Americans

Along with Fort Snelling, the United States established an Indian Agency post at the place where the Minnesota and Mississippi rivers meet. When the fur trade began, the Dakota and Anishinaabe had traded furs to the French and British in exchange for goods such as iron tools, firearms, and food. They had made their own tools for centuries but quickly became accustomed to European alternatives. By the time Fort Snelling was built and Americans began to live in the area permanently, the Indigenous peoples had come to rely on European goods. Therefore, they were also reliant on the fur trade.

The Dakota and Anishinaabe peoples' dependence on the fur trade only grew. Yet the trade declined significantly in the 1840s. Changing trends, coupled with falling prices, meant that the U.S. government and private companies no longer needed the Dakota and Anishinaabe to provide furs. At the same time, the U.S. government used treaties to reduce the lands on which the tribes could hunt. With so much of their livelihood now reliant on Europeans and the fur trade, giving away their land eventually became their only choice.

Nearby, in what is now Wisconsin, other tribes were being forced from their lands into Minnesota. The Ho-Chunk people had lived on roughly eight million acres (32,375 sq km) in Wisconsin for many generations. When lead miners moved into southwestern Wisconsin, the Ho-Chunk began to be pushed out. They were relocated to Iowa before eventually making their way to Minnesota. For a time, the U.S. government placed them as a buffer between the warring

Dakota and Anishinaabe. The Ho-Chunk were moved to different parts of Minnesota, then into South Dakota, until they had no land at all. Today, many Ho-Chunk live back in Wisconsin, although they have no reservation or official land to call their own.

**The Ho-Chunk made decorated bags from furs and other materials.**

## Minnesota Becomes a Territory

By 1800, the land that is now Minnesota had been under the control of three different European countries: France, Spain, and Britain. Gradually, the United States took control of the region, and it became clear that Minnesota's future lay with the United States. Before becoming a state, though, the land that eventually became the state of Minnesota was part of nine different territories: Northwest, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Louisiana, Missouri, Iowa, and, finally, Minnesota.

The Minnesota Territory was created in large part because other states were created nearby around the same time. When Iowa became a state in 1846, the land in Minnesota west of the Mississippi had no government. Similarly, when Wisconsin became a state in 1848, the land from the St. Croix River to the Missouri River was also left without a government. Henry Sibley, the high-ranking official with the American Fur Company, was a delegate to Congress for this "no man's land." He worked with Congress to establish a U.S. government presence in this place that was part of two different territories.

The Minnesota Territory was established on March 3, 1849. As a territory, Minnesota received a governor from the U.S. government. It also received a court system, legislature, and delegate to Congress. Only the legislators and the delegate were elected. All others, including the governor, were appointed. The first governor of the Minnesota Territory was Alexander Ramsey. He was also the Superintendent of Indian Affairs. This meant he was one of the parties who negotiated treaties with the Dakota and Anishinaabe on behalf of the U.S. government. The first session of the **legislative** assembly for the Minnesota Territory convened on September 3, 1849, in St. Paul, which has been the capital of Minnesota ever since.

**Vocabulary**

**legislative**, adj. having the power to make laws

Two years after Minnesota became a territory, the U.S. government signed the treaties of Traverse des Sioux and Mendota with the Dakota nation. Ramsey played a key role in making sure the Dakota signed. With the treaties, Minnesota acquired millions of acres of land from the Dakota people, opening the door for even more settlers and an eventual path to statehood.

## Statehood for Minnesota

One of the reasons Minnesota wanted to become a state was its rapid growth. In 1850, the American population of the territory was just six thousand people. By the time it became a state in 1858, the population had exploded to 152,000. This rapid growth was accompanied by the rise of new businesses and

**Before the Minnesota Territory, 1848**


**Before: In 1848, Minnesota was stuck between two states after it was part of two different territories. Both Iowa and Wisconsin became states first in part because their populations had grown so rapidly.**

**Minnesota Territory, 1849**


**After: By 1849, Minnesota was a more established presence among its neighboring states, both of which were still more populous.**

industries that were gradually replacing the fur trade. These new businesses and growing cities were powered by machines that harnessed the force of falling water from St. Anthony Falls in Minneapolis. Industries like milling and logging led to the growth of settlements along the Mississippi River, as people moved to take up work in these industries. Lumber production began in the 1840s, and soon Minneapolis was known as "Sawdust Town."

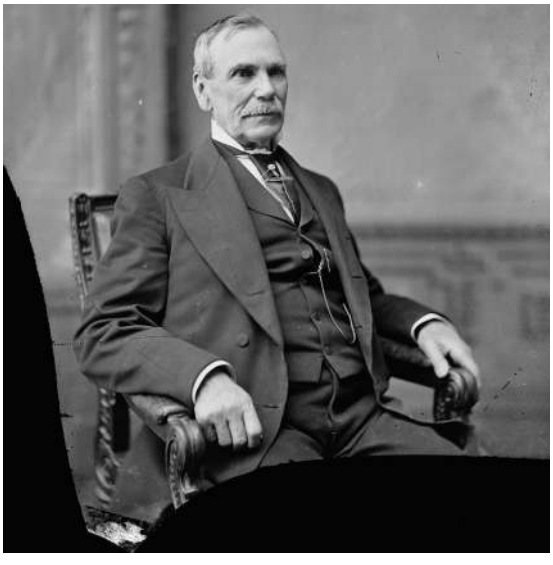
As the territory's population and economy grew, statehood became increasingly attractive to Minnesota's people and their leaders. States sent more representatives to Congress and thus had a stronger voice in the national government. States also had more power than territories to determine their own laws, economic policies, and values.

The road from territory to statehood was not an easy one. At the time, the United States was bitterly divided over the issue of slavery. In some states, mostly in the South, slavery was legal. In the North, it was illegal. Leaders in free states (where slavery was illegal) believed both that slavery should be illegal everywhere and that the slave states (where slavery was legal) wanted slavery to be legal throughout the nation. In the 1850s, the disagreement intensified, turning violent in places like Kansas. Some national leaders believed in keeping a balance between free and slave states, hoping that this would prevent the argument from developing into a wider conflict. So, when Minnesota applied for statehood, there was a major political problem. If Minnesota were to obtain statehood, it would do so as a free state. But Congress only allowed a free state to enter the Union only if a slave state

was admitted at the same time. Minnesota was supposed to be admitted with Kansas, a state that allowed slavery. But the pro-slavery constitution that Kansas submitted as part of its bid to become a state in 1857 was fraudulent. It had been written by a body that was not actually authorized to do so. This delayed Minnesota's statehood by many months.

Finally, Minnesota was admitted as a state on May 11, 1858. It became the thirty-second state. At the time, Minnesota still lacked communications and transport infrastructure, such as a telegraph system. It did not have much in the way of roadways. It took two weeks for news of Minnesota's admission as one of the United States to reach the capital city of St. Paul. The news was carried up the Mississippi by steamboat!

Just one month after Minnesota became a state, a group of Dakota leaders were called to Washington, D.C. There, they were held like prisoners until they signed a treaty that gave away even more of their land. In the end, they forfeited, or gave up, all Dakota land to the north and east of the Minnesota River. They were left with a strip of land measuring only ten miles (16 km) by 150 miles (241 km).



**One of the two U.S. senators for the new state of Minnesota was James Shields. He is the only person to have served as a senator for three states: Illinois (1849–1855), Minnesota (1858–1859), and Missouri (1879).**

Dakota leader Wamditanka (Big Eagle) later said of this agreement:

> The selling of that strip north of the Minnesota caused great dissatisfaction among the [Dakota], and Little Crow was always blamed for the part he took in the sale. It caused us all to move to the south side of the river, where there was but very little game, and many of our people, under the treaty, were induced to give up the old life and go to work like white men, which was very distasteful to many.

Minnesota achieved statehood right as a period of warfare and uncertainty was about to begin. The conflicts with the Dakota and Anishinaabe over the ownership and settlement of land were about to escalate. And the growing nation that Minnesota had just joined as a state was about to tear itself apart over the issue of slavery.

# Chapter 5
# Minnesota and the Civil War

**Big Question**

How was Minnesota involved in and affected by the Civil War?

**A New State in a Major War** It was July 2, 1863, the second day of the most important battle of the Civil War, in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. The First Minnesota Regiment was at the heart of the battle. This first group of Minnesotans to volunteer for the war had been sent to do the impossible. Their dwindling group of just 262 soldiers was to push back nearly 1,300 Confederate soldiers advancing through the cornfields and peach orchards in front of them.

Against all odds, those 262 Minnesotans held their own against the onslaught of Confederate forces. With their fallen comrades all around them, they persisted, bravely holding back the enemy advance. The Confederate soldiers did not break into Union territory, thanks to the heroism of the First Minnesota Regiment.

Even though Minnesota had only been a state for five years when the battle broke out, members of the First Minnesota Regiment fought courageously at Gettysburg.

## Minnesota on the Eve of War

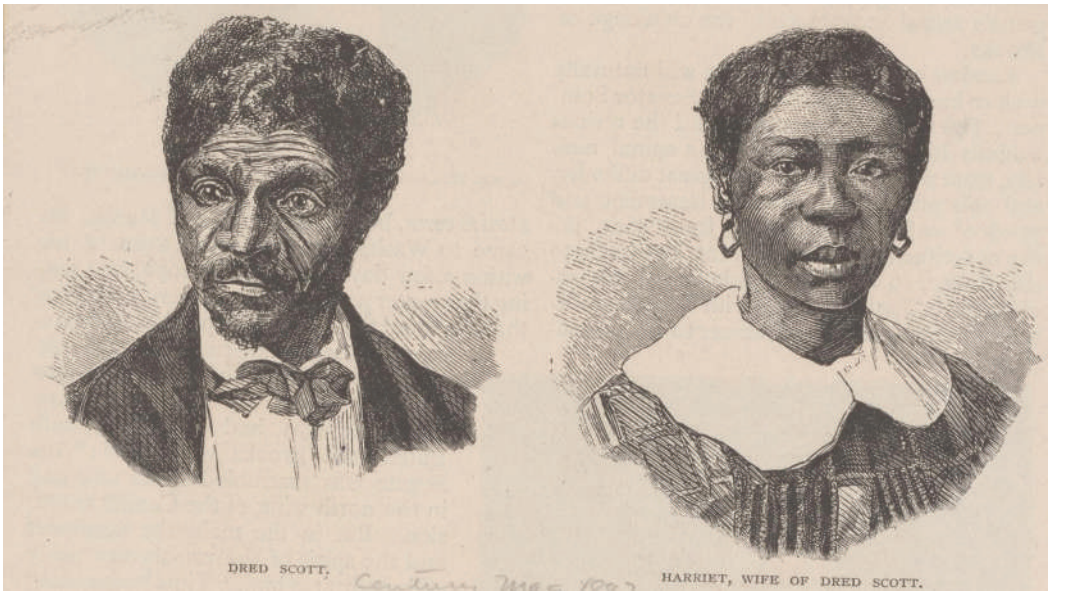
The Civil War did not come out of nowhere. It was the result of decades of tension and disagreement within the United States over the issue of slavery. Slavery had been practiced in the United States since at least 1619. As the economy of northern states became more industrial, slavery decreased in importance and eventually became illegal. Many people nationwide, but especially in the North, viewed slavery as both an unjust practice and a poor economic strategy. In the South, however, slavery remained the backbone of the economy, especially in the cotton, tobacco, and sugar industries. These industries relied on the work of millions of enslaved Black laborers whose ancestors had been brought to the Americas against their will. Much of Southern society adopted the belief that slavery was justified and necessary. Over time, hostility between Northern free states and Southern slave states grew. As more states were admitted to the Union, the debate intensified.

For a while, Congress sought balance. It only admitted an equal number of free and pro-slavery states at any one time. This policy was the result of the 1820 Missouri Compromise. In 1858, Minnesota entered as a free state. Kansas was admitted at the same time as a state that permitted slavery. But although slavery was illegal in Minnesota, there was not yet a federal law against it. This meant that slaveholders could bring enslaved people into Minnesota. In the city of Shakopee, for example, Joseph Godfrey was enslaved by a family within the city from their arrival in 1844 until he escaped in 1848. People in Minnesota benefited

from slavery in other ways as well. Merchants in the North, including Minnesota, benefited from being able to buy and sell inexpensive goods produced in the South by enslaved laborers. Additionally, Northern industry relied on raw materials like cotton and sugar grown and harvested by enslaved workers on Southern plantations.

Because slavery was not yet illegal on a federal level, it was not illegal on federal lands or in federal institutions. In Minnesota, that included Fort Snelling. In fact, in the decades before Minnesota became a state, soldiers were actively encouraged to bring enslaved people to the fort, even though it was in a free territory. In 1836, an army surgeon named John Emerson arrived at Fort Snelling with Dred Scott, an enslaved Black man he had purchased in St. Louis, MIssouri. At Fort Snelling, Scott met and married Harriet Robinson, an enslaved Black woman who was owned by the local Indian Agent.

Dred and Harriet Scott lived together at Fort Snelling for two years before moving with Emerson to Missouri, a state in which slavery was legal. Emerson died in 1843, and the Scotts became the property of Emerson's widow, Irene. Irene moved to live in St. Louis, while the Scotts were hired out to work for other people. The Scotts wanted freedom. In 1846, they filed a lawsuit for freedom with a St. Louis court. They were trying to use a law in Missouri that said that anyone who had been wrongfully enslaved could sue for their freedom. The Scotts' argument was that since they had been held as slaves in a free territory—Minnesota—they should now be free people. The court ruled against them. Dred Scott contested the




**Dred and Harriet Scott and their two daughters were able to stay together, even through periods when other people claimed to own them. This was often not the case for enslaved families.**

decision. Eventually, the case went all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. In 1857, in the case known as *Dred Scott v. Sandford*, the Supreme Court ruled that African Americans were not citizens and therefore had no right to sue for freedom.

The *Dred Scott* decision sparked outrage in Minnesota and other free states and territories. The decision upheld the legality of slavery, including in territories. The court ruled that the U.S. government, specifically Congress, could not force territories to abolish slavery. This outraged opponents of slavery.

The *Dred Scott* decision and other laws helped to inflame national tensions over the issue of slavery. The Compromise of 1850 had been an attempt to calm these tensions. The compromise admitted California as a free state and established the border of Texas. It also gave the territories of Utah and New Mexico the power to decide

about slavery for themselves. At the same time, extraordinary powers were granted to owners of escaped enslaved people to pursue their "property," even when people had escaped to states where slavery was illegal. The Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 required that escaped enslaved people be returned to the people who had owned them, even if they were in a free state. The push to abolish slavery altogether only became stronger, as the United States headed for war.

$1000

REWARD!

RAN AWAY from the subscribers, on the night of the 5th inst. a NEGRO MAN named

George,

aged 22 or 23 years, 5 feet 7 or 8 inches in height—color, a dark black, a long or double head, had a variety of clothing, among which may be found a green frock cloth coat, with a black velvet collar, a low-crowned white silk hat.

One negro BOY, aged 25 or twenty-six years; 5 feet 10 or 11 inches high, named

Jefferson—

he is a dark mulatto, slim and spare made, had on a fine Janes coat and a variety of other clothing.

One negro girl, named ESTHER, (nicknamed Puss,) aged 17 or 18, black, tall, slim and regularly proportioned,—diffident and serious, embarrassed when addressed, and at the same time picks or plays with fingers. She is about 5 feet 6 or 8 inches high, and sister to the boy named George.

A girl named AMANDA, aged 15 or 16, a dark copper colored mulatto, thick and heavy set, 5 ft. 4 inches high, has a sullen and impudent look, a large head of hair, and a green linsey dress. She and Esther both have a variety of clothing.

☞ The above reward will be given if the said negroes can be apprehended or secured so that we can get them; or will give $300 for either of s'd negro boys, or $200 for either of s'd girls. Of the two boys the mulatto is the tallest. And of the girls the black one is the taller.

Germantown, Mason Co. Ky. 20th January, 1840.

ANDERSON DONIPHAN,
JOSEPH FRAZEE,
JOHN D. MORFORD.

**Because of the Fugitive Slave Law and posters like this one, many of the people who attempted to escape slavery in the 1850s were captured and returned.**

## The Outbreak of War

The long disagreement about slavery finally exploded into war after the presidential election of 1860. Abraham Lincoln, a vocal supporter of the abolition of slavery, was elected president. Pro-slavery states in the South saw Lincoln's election as the first step toward the total abolition of slavery in the United States, so many of them decided to leave the Union altogether. Before Lincoln was even inaugurated in March 1861, seven Southern states **seceded** from the Union and formed the Confederate States of America.

**Vocabulary**

**secede**, v. to withdraw formally from an alliance or organization

Lincoln and the U.S. government viewed secession as an illegal rebellion against the United States. Confederate forces began seizing federal forts and facilities in the South. One of these forts, Fort Sumter in Charleston, South Carolina, refused to surrender to the Confederates. The Civil War broke out on April 12, 1861, when Confederate forces opened fire on Fort Sumter. Lincoln then called for the states to provide troops for use against the Confederates. More Southern states seceded after this.

Although Minnesota had been a state for less than three years, it was suddenly thrust into the national crisis. Minnesota's leaders supported the Union cause. Governor Alexander Ramsey was in Washington, D.C., when Fort Sumter was attacked. As a show of his and Minnesota's commitment to the Union, Governor Ramsey immediately promised one thousand volunteer troops from Minnesota to aid the Union. These were the first soldiers offered for the Union effort. Minnesotans were ordered to prepare for war. Fort Snelling had closed when Minnesota became a state in 1858, but it reopened when the Civil War began. It became a training center for all those new recruits promised by Governor Ramsey. The care and maintenance of those troops largely fell on the women of Fort Snelling, especially wives of

**Governor Alexander Ramsey eventually served as commander for the more than 25,000 soldiers from Minnesota who served in the Civil War.**

soldiers. They washed clothes, worked as servants to officers, and served as midwives. As many as 20 percent of the people working at Fort Snelling were women.

**Brothers Hiram (left) and William Gripman were teenagers when they served in the Third Minnesota Volunteer Infantry regiment. Both brothers survived the war.**

The people of Minnesota enthusiastically supported the Union. When the war began, more volunteers stepped up to serve than the Union army needed. This enthusiasm continued throughout the conflict. Overall, nearly ten percent of Minnesota's population fought in the war. Six hundred Minnesotans who fought were killed in battle, while roughly 1,800 died of accidents and disease. Many of these soldiers were young men, especially near the end of the war, when the need for new soldiers increased and younger men—even teenagers—were recruited to fill this need.

Life in Minnesota did not pause because of the war. New immigrants continued to flock to the state. This wave of settlement was supported by legislation passed during the war. The Homestead Act of 1862 allowed individuals moving to Minnesota to claim up to 160 acres of land, which had been taken from the Dakota people, if they agreed to improve it by farming it. After five years, they were allowed to keep the property after paying a small filing fee.

The Homestead Act provided a great boost for Minnesota. The population increased from 172,000 to 250,000 from 1861 to 1865. The war itself was beneficial for the state as well. The demand for natural resources, such as wheat and lumber, caused the state's economy to grow.

**The Homestead Act made settlement throughout the Midwest possible for European immigrants who might not otherwise have been able to afford it.**

## The Battle of Gettysburg

As you read, Minnesotans played a key role in one of the decisive battles of the Civil War. After two years of fighting, the Union and Confederate armies met in the cornfields of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. From July 1 to 3, 1863, more people died at Gettysburg than at any other battle in the Civil War. The battle was also a turning point in the war. Confederate General Robert E. Lee believed that his army had to invade the North if the Confederacy was ever going to win the war. But the Union stayed strong at Gettysburg, and Lee's army could not advance. Lee's army was forced to retreat, with heavy losses. The battle was the beginning of the end for the Confederacy.

One reason the Confederate army was unable to advance into Union territory is the actions of the First Minnesota regiment. The First Minnesota had already fought in other tough battles, including the Battle of Antietam, the deadliest single day of the

**The monument to the First Minnesota at Gettysburg honors the men who ran through this field, directly into oncoming Confederate forces.**

war. But their efforts at Gettysburg helped secure the Union's victory, both in the battle and in the war.

On July 2, 1863, Confederates were advancing hard against the Union's positions near Gettysburg. Union General Winfield Scott Hancock sent the Minnesota First regiment to block the advance. The regiment had already suffered many losses in the fighting, but its remaining 262 soldiers ran bravely forward when ordered to protect the Union line. They fought desperately against the attacking Confederate forces. Just forty-seven of the First Minnesota survived. Despite the significant casualties, one survivor said that "Not a man wavered." The First Minnesota Regiment prevented the Union line from being broken. The forty-seven survivors went on to fight the next day as well.

## The Road to Union Victory

Minnesotans fought bravely throughout the Civil War at other battles, too, such as the Battle of Shiloh in Tennessee and the Battle of Vicksburg in Mississippi. Near the end of the war, they were even part of General William T. Sherman's "March to the Sea." This was an attack launched deep into the territory of the South by the Union in

late 1864, which aimed to disrupt railways and ports to cripple the South's economy. Minnesota soldiers joined Sherman's forces in traveling 285 miles (458.6 km) by foot across Georgia from Atlanta to Savannah. This campaign, along with the fall of the Confederate capital city of Richmond, Virginia, finally convinced the Confederates to surrender on April 9, 1865, nearly two years after the Battle of Gettysburg.

After the Emancipation Proclamation went into effect in early 1863, 104 African American men from Minnesota volunteered as Union soldiers. Not allowed to serve with white soldiers, they formed the United States Colored Troops. By the end of the war, African American soldiers accounted for 10 percent of all those fighting for the Union army.

A few women even fought alongside men, though they had to lie to do so. Women

### The Captured Flag

On July 3, 1863, Private Marshall Sherman of the First Minnesota captured the flag of the 28th Virginia regiment at the Battle of Gettysburg. Flags were incredibly important during the Civil War. The standard-bearers, those who carried the flags into battle, raised the flags high as a reference point for their fellow soldiers. This also made them a clear target. Capturing an opposing flag was both a military and morale victory. Virginia has since asked for the flag to be returned many times, but Minnesota has always refused to do so. In responding to a request in the year 2000, Minnesota governor Jesse Ventura said, "Why? I mean, we won. "He added," We took it. That makes it our heritage."

such as Frances Clayton posed as men to be able to fight in the war. Clayton fought on the front lines at the battles of Shiloh and Murfreesboro. Other women helped soldiers near battlefields as nurses, providers of supplies, and spies. But most women preserved things at home. In many ways, the work of those women back home was just as important. They maintained the war effort and kept soldiers' morale strong.


**African American soldiers were actively recruited to be part of the Union army after the Emancipation Proclamation of early 1863.**

# Chapter 6
# The U.S.-Dakota War

**Big Question**

What happened in the U.S.-Dakota War of 1862?

**"When Men Are Hungry"** On August 16, 2012, Minnesota Governor Mark Dayton issued a statement marking a formal Day of Remembrance and **Reconciliation** in Minnesota. A century and a half earlier, Minnesota's very first governor, Alexander Ramsey, had called for the total removal of Dakota people from Minnesota. Dayton's statement noted, "I am appalled by Governor Ramsey's words and by his encouragement of vigilante violence against innocent people, and I **repudiate** them. I know that almost all Minnesotans living today would be just as revolted. The viciousness and violence, which were commonplace 150 years ago in Minnesota, are not accepted or allowed now."

**Vocabulary**

**reconciliation**, n. restoration of a broken relationship

**repudiate**, v. to reject or refuse

Dayton offered condolences for all those who lost family members during the U.S.-Dakota War of 1862. He honored the American soldiers, Dakota people, and settlers who lost their lives. He urged all

This Dakota war shield shows Native fighters surrounded by U.S. cavalry.

Minnesotans not only to remember this dark time in history, but also to work toward reconciliation together.

## Relations Between the United States and the Dakota

In 1850, the population of Minnesota was a little more than six thousand people. Just ten years later, it was already more than 172,000 people. It continued to grow even faster through the rest of the century. Most of the new residents were immigrants from Europe. By the end of the century, more than 60 percent of Minnesota's immigrant population came from Germany, Norway, or Sweden.

All those new residents needed places to live. To meet this need, the U.S. government turned once again to Minnesota's Indigenous peoples. By 1850, those people were in a desperate situation. They had relied heavily on the fur trade, which had mostly left the area by this time. Without enough food and with no money, the Dakota and the Anishinaabe thought they had no choice but to give up their land. Many believed that the regular payments the government promised in return would be the only way to survive.

But the notion of buying and selling land in the first place was still foreign to the Indigenous nations of Minnesota. They did not believe the land could be owned. They viewed the land and its resources as part of the world that provided things for people but that had to be respected as a partner and provider. Dakota prayers

end with the words “Mitákuye Oyás’iŋ,” which mean, “We are all related.” They believe that humans are connected to all the plants, animals, and water. Relations extend to the clouds, the sun, the sky, and even the planets. The Dakota believe that not only are all those things connected, but they also depend on each other. When one celebrates, they all celebrate. When one suffers, they all suffer.

**Indigenous tribes relied on bison for nearly all their needs. There were around eight million bison in 1870, but fewer than five hundred by 1890. This had an overwhelming impact on tribes’ ability to survive.**

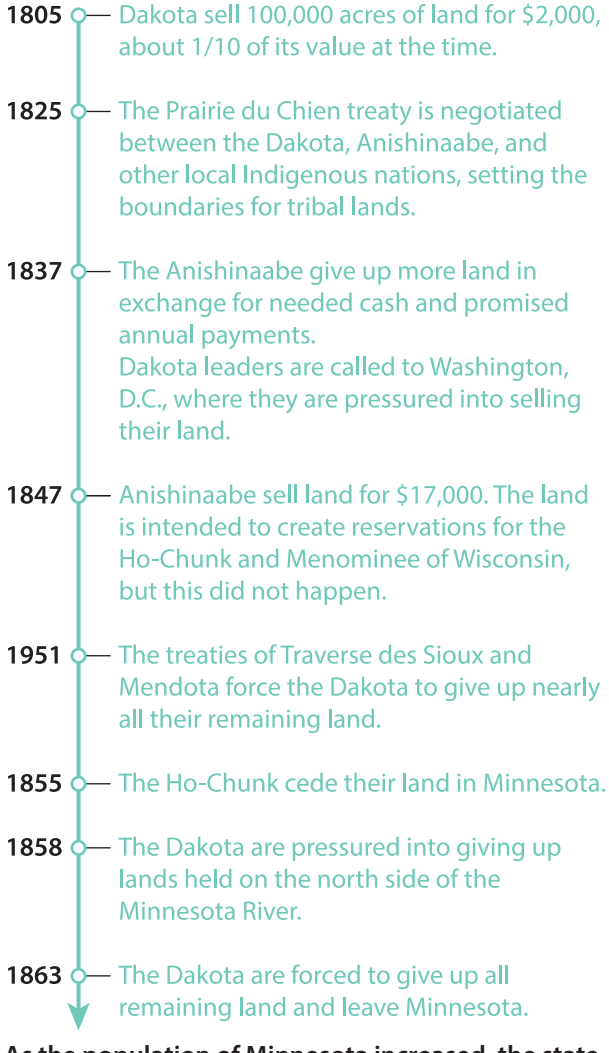
The settlers, on the other hand, believed land could be owned and tamed. The U.S. government agreed. The U.S. government had been supporting the displacement of Native American peoples and the seizure of their land for decades. It was a national policy. In the early 1800s, the U.S. government forced Native peoples in the Southeast and Midwest to leave their ancestral lands and move to the Indian Territory in what is present-day Oklahoma. In 1862, the Homestead Act allowed settlers to each claim 160 acres of Indigenous land in Minnesota and elsewhere.

Settlers moved onto the vacated land. They built houses and towns, dug mines, and fenced off land, treating it as their private property. The differing perspectives about land and resources were made worse by the making and breaking of treaties and agreements with Native Americans.

## Broken Promises

The Anishinaabe and the Dakota gave up much of their land through a series of treaties, believing they had no other options for survival. They believed they were entering into promises with the U.S. government for food, money, and other necessities. Though the fur trade had mostly left Minnesota, the new owners

**Treaties between the federal government and Indigenous tribes in Minnesota, 1805–1863**




**As the population of Minnesota increased, the state and U.S. governments worked to acquire more land from the Dakota and Anishinaabe people, even when they did not have the legal right to do so.**

of the American Fur Company were still very influential. Henry Sibley and others negotiated with the Indigenous people on behalf of the U.S. government. But the negotiations were often unfair. Most of the treaties presented to tribal leaders were written only in English. Often, leaders were not made aware of any potentially unfair terms before signing. Additionally, promises that were made in the treaties were rarely kept.

Through a treaty in 1837, the Anishinaabe gave up their land. In exchange, they received $24,000 in the form of cash, goods, and services. The fur traders were to receive $70,000 to settle debts they claimed the Anishinaabe owed them. Government agents received $100,000. The treaty with the Anishinaabe also helped the timber industry, as the tribe turned over millions of acres of forest land to the United States. The Dakota also signed a treaty that year. They received $16,000 in money and goods. They were also promised $40,000 per year. Fur traders received $90,000 they claimed the Dakota owed them, and government agents received $110,000.

Though both nations gave up so much in 1837, these were not the final treaties. In 1851, the Treaty of Traverse des Sioux and the Treaty of Mendota transferred twenty-four million acres of land in southeastern Minnesota from the Dakota to the United States. Again, the treaty promised payments to the Dakota that they desperately needed. But it also took a good amount of money from them that the U.S. government claimed was necessary to settle debts. Because of the land acquired by these two additional treaties, 100,000 additional European immigrants were able to settle in Minnesota.

**The "Sioux" in "Traverse des Sioux" is often used to describe the Dakota. It is based on the Anishinaabe insult for the Dakota, "Nadowessioux," which means "little snakes."**

By 1858, the Dakota only had a small strip of land left in the state. They did not have land on which to hunt for food, and their treaty payments were not being delivered. Government agents took the payments to settle debts they claimed the Dakota owed. The U.S. government continued to encourage settlement on the land that was once occupied by the Dakota. If settlers occupied the land, it would be far less likely to ever be returned.

When the Civil War broke out in 1861, conditions became even worse for the Dakota. The federal government had fewer resources, so even less was going to support the starving Dakota people. The fur traders were no longer extending credit for the necessities the Dakota needed. Life on the reservation was increasingly hard, as crops were failing and living conditions became more serious. The Dakota became more desperate.

In 1862, their leader Taoyateduta (Little Crow) pled for help from the U.S. government:

> We have waited a long time. The money is ours, but we cannot get it. We have no food, but here are these stores, filled with food. We ask that you, the agent, make some arrangement by which we can get food from the stores, or else we may take our own way to keep ourselves from starving. When men are hungry, they help themselves.

## The Dakota Go to War

On August 17, 1862, a group of four starving Dakota hunters encountered storekeeper Robinson Jones near Acton Township in Meeker County. They followed him to a homestead, where they dared each other to shoot at the white settlers. The Dakota men ultimately killed Robinson, as well as three other people. As they left, they also shot and killed a fifteen-year-old girl.

The four men returned to their village and told their story. The Dakota leaders did not initially want to go to war with the much larger and more powerful U.S. Army. Finally, Taoyateduta and other leaders agreed to lead the Dakota into battle. Dakota leader Wanbditanka (Big Eagle) later recalled the difficult decision. He did not believe war was best but said, "I thought I must go with my band and my nation, and I said to my men that I would lead them into the war, and we would . . . do the best we could."

**The battle fought in New Ulm was the largest battle over a U.S. town since the American Revolution. Afterward, children were orphaned and women were unable to support themselves financially.**

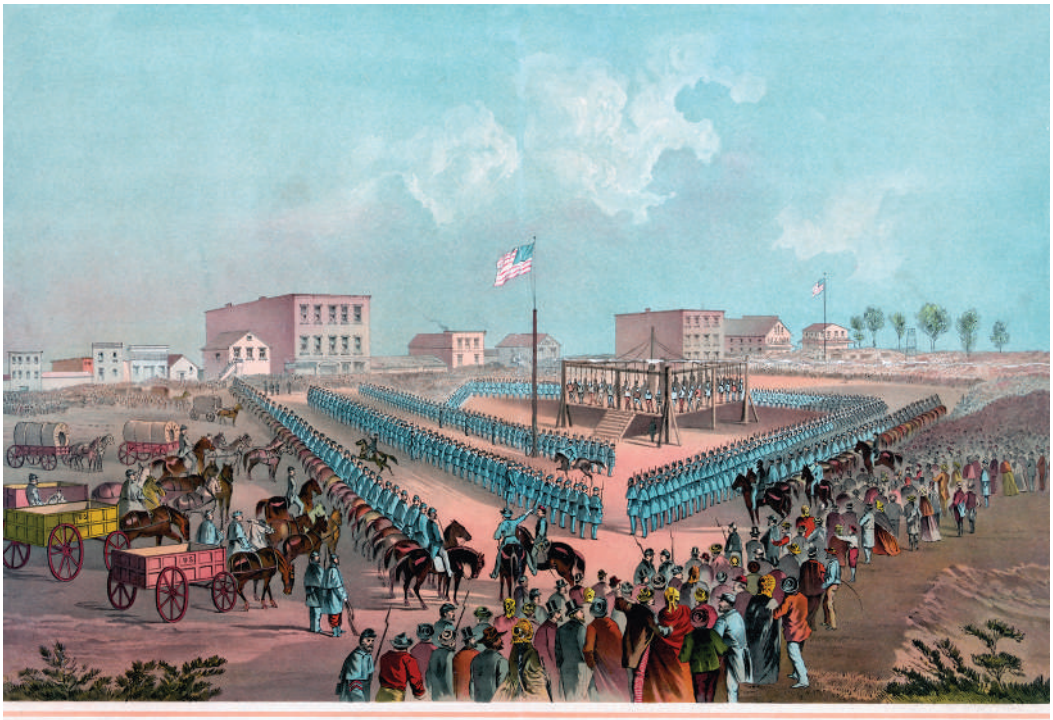
Beginning the next day, Dakota warriors went to war. They attacked settlements and forts in towns such as New Ulm and Hutchinson. With the United States sending soldiers and supplies to support the war effort in the Civil War, the war dragged on for six weeks. More than two hundred settlers were ultimately killed, with another two hundred women and children taken hostage. By September 24, the Dakota were finally overpowered. Taoyateduta and his men fled to the west, and all the hostages were released.

## The Aftermath of the War

The Dakota experienced **retribution** for the war almost immediately. After just three weeks, federal courts tried 392 Dakota men and sentenced 303 of them to death. Some of their trials lasted only five minutes. Those who were convicted were sent to Mankato to await their fate. Another 1,658 Dakota people—mostly women, children, and elderly—were sent to Fort Snelling. There, they were held in a makeshift concentration camp below a cliff near the river. This place they called Bdote, which was so sacred to the Dakota

**Vocabulary**

**retribution**, n. punishment inflicted as vengeance for a wrongdoing




**The Dakota who were put on trial as a result of the war had not been allowed legal representation.**

people, was now the site of their captivity. That winter, as many as three hundred Dakota people died due to disease and the harsh living conditions.

By December of 1862, President Abraham Lincoln had **commuted** the convictions for all but thirty-eight of the Dakota men who had been tried and convicted. On the morning of December 26, 1862, those thirty-eight men were hanged in front of a crowd of spectators. It is still the largest mass execution in American history.

**Vocabulary**

**commute**, v. to reduce or eliminate the punishment for a crime

But the retribution of the U.S. government did not stop there. In February of 1863, Congress voided all previous treaties with the Dakota and took all their land. A month later, another law forced the Dakota to leave Minnesota altogether. Congress made it illegal to be Dakota in Minnesota, the place named in their language and where their tradition says that all life began. Roughly 1,300 Dakota people were moved west from Minnesota into the Dakota Territory. There, two hundred Dakota—mostly children—died within the first six months.

Other Indigenous nations were also affected by this removal. The Ho-Chunk of Wisconsin were living in Minnesota after being removed from their land. They were not allowed to remain in the state. The Ho-Chunk were also briefly held at Fort Snelling before being moved out of Minnesota, away from the fertile lands that the settlers wanted for themselves.

## Remembrance and Reconciliation

More than 150 years after the U.S.-Dakota War, it is still technically illegal to be Dakota in Minnesota. The 1863 law that removed them from the state was never officially **overturned**. Still, both sides do much to remember and find reconciliation.

**Vocabulary**

**overturn**, v. to reverse a previous decision

Some modern members of the Dakota nation participate in an annual ride to promote reconciliation and to remember the thirty-eight warriors who were executed. From 2008 to 2022, they traveled more than three hundred miles (482.8 km) each December on horseback, including one empty "spirit horse." In 2022, participants concluded their journey by riding through the streets of Mankato and ending at the site of the December 1862 hanging. But while a crowd of four thousand spectators showed up to witness an execution in 1862, the ride of remembrance in 2022 was greeted by cheers of support, a police escort, and even a formal apology from the governor. Governor Tim Walz stood among the Dakota riders and crowd to share a formal apology. "As governor of Minnesota," he said, "I stand here today to say today I'm deeply sorry."

# Chapter 7
# An Era of Growth and Change

**Big Question**

How did Minnesota change in the late 1800s and early 1900s?

## Big Conflicts and Big Changes

Minnesota's northern woods are filled with a wide variety of trees, including maple, oak, and aspen. In the fall, the leaves of the many trees change to a rainbow of colors. Just a century ago, the land was covered with hardly anything but pine trees. Today, only a small patch of pine forest remains in the entire state. Lumberjacks in Minnesota worked from sunrise to sunset, six days a week, cutting down pines. They bundled up in layers of wool in the winter and survived Minnesota bugs and heat in the summer. They permanently changed the landscape of most of the state of Minnesota.

The red and gold leaves of Minnesota's northern forests make a striking sight.

## Economic Growth Before the Wars

The economy in Minnesota's early history was based on its relationship with the land. Indigenous tribes developed trading systems and bartered for the things they could not grow, hunt, or craft for themselves. When the fur traders moved into what is now Minnesota, they established an economy of their own, in partnership with the Dakota and Anishinaabe tribes. After the fur industry faded, other natural resources became more important to Minnesota's economic future.

Before Europeans came to Minnesota, more than 60 percent of the land was covered by forests. As settlements in the area grew in the first part of the nineteenth century, the demand for lumber grew with it. Logging quickly became a very profitable industry, especially in Minnesota's pine forests. Lumberjacks used Minnesota's rivers to move logs from pines and other trees. In the 1830s, the St. Croix River was a regional hub of settlement and the logging industry.

By the end of the century, railroads were the primary means of transporting logs from deep in the forests to the riverbanks and beyond. At the industry's peak in the year 1900, more than twenty thousand lumberjacks worked to remove trees from Minnesota's forests. Another twenty thousand worked in sawmills, and even more worked in factories that created products from the wood. This pace continued for the next ten years. It depleted Minnesota's more than thirty million acres of forest to fewer than eighteen million acres.

By the 1860s, the center of the logging industry had moved from the St. Croix River to the Mississippi River. The Mississippi was becoming a much busier **thoroughfare**, thanks in large part to the other industries that had sprung up along it. Steamboats moved lumber and other products hundreds of miles along the Mississippi. The river was also a source of great power, thanks to St. Anthony Falls (Owámniyomni). This not only powered the sawmills but also the mills that turned grains into flour. By the 1880s, Minneapolis was the "Flour Mill Capital of the World." The Pillsbury A Mill would be the largest mill in the entire world for thirty years.

**Vocabulary**

**thoroughfare**, n. a road or path that forms a route between two or more places


**The Pillsbury A Mill still stands, although it has been converted into an apartment building. The large white "A" can still be seen.**

The Mississippi River helped fuel the milling industry. Flour companies flourished along the river. So did breweries and distilleries. All these industries relied on the grains, corn, and other crops that were grown in Minnesota. Small, family-run farms spread throughout the state, beginning in the 1840s. Many of them were settled by immigrants, mostly from European countries like Germany, Sweden, and Norway. They established farms and worked on fields in southern Minnesota and in the Red River Valley of the north. These new Minnesotans also helped fuel the growing machine industry in the state, especially on the northern Iron Range and in Minneapolis. The machine industry makes machines and parts for factories. Immigrants often did the dangerous work of mining and milling. They also filled many of the jobs to support the growing population, working as teachers, grocers, and mechanics.

## A Changing Society

Along with helping to grow the economy, the influx of new people to Minnesota changed society as well. James J. Hill built railroads connecting Duluth to Seattle, and Chicago to St. Louis to Denver. He also acquired routes from other railroads. His overwhelming dominance gave him the nickname "Empire Builder."

The Populist Movement grew right along with Hill's empire. It supported labor unions and other social movements meant to protect farmers and other working people. The most widely known Minnesotan of the time was Populist politician and author Ignatius Donnelly. He wrote that the overwhelming

wealth of select few millionaires—such as Hill and his **monopoly** over the rail industry—would ultimately bring an end to American democracy.

**Vocabulary**

**monopoly**, n. complete ownership or control of a resource or industry

Donnelly wrote the preamble to the 1892 platform of the People's Party (the Populists). In it, he argued that an unequal distribution of wealth was both unjust and a great danger to American society:

> The fruits of the toil of millions are badly stolen to build up colossal fortunes for a few, unprecedented in the history of mankind. The possessors of these, in turn, despise the Republic and endanger liberty. From the same prolific womb of governmental injustice we breed the two great classes—tramps and millionaires.

The Populist Party and this Progressive Era helped usher in a wave of new ideas. Minnesota farmers were increasingly concerned about corporate power and the imbalance of wealth. They joined farmers' rights groups like the National Grange, which was strongly supported by Donnelly. Farmers supported labor rights of all working-class Minnesotans and also supported the rights of women.

The Minnesota Woman **Suffrage** Association began organizing for women's suffrage in 1881. The next year, the National Woman Suffrage Association held its annual convention in Minnesota. By the time the Nineteenth Amendment gave women the right to vote in 1920,

**Vocabulary**

**suffrage**, n. the right to vote

about thirty thousand women belonged to suffrage organizations in Minnesota.

The rise of the women's suffrage movement in Minnesota was supported by the Populists. Yet it was introduced to the state by immigrants. In Scandinavian countries such as Norway or Sweden, where so many immigrants came from, women already had the right to vote. Migration patterns changed other aspects of life in Minnesota as well.

Beginning in 1876, immigrants from China and Japan fled the racial hostilities they were experiencing on the West Coast. Some opened restaurants and laundry businesses in Minneapolis and St. Paul. Over time, many also filled the dangerous jobs in the mines on the Iron Range. Minnesota was not as openly hostile


**Women from Minnesota stand in front of the Congressional Union for Woman Suffrage in Washington, D.C. The group ultimately became the National Women's Party, the first group to picket the White House.**

toward immigrants as on the West Coast. Yet Asian immigrants were still victims of racism and discrimination, especially in real estate.

New Black residents in Minnesota also faced discrimination. In the Twin Cities at the beginning of the twentieth century, Black Minnesotans who tried to buy property were often restricted by community **covenants**. These policies **segregated** their communities. Still, small but thriving Black communities were established throughout the state. The Rondo neighborhood in St. Paul became the center of Black culture in the Twin Cities. It was filled with upper-middle-class families, **integrated** schools, thriving businesses, and vibrant churches. Black Americans from other parts of the country migrated to Minnesota. They wanted not only to escape the racial violence of the South but also to find a better life.

**Vocabulary**

**covenant**, n. an official agreement

**segregate**, v. to keep people separate, usually on the basis of race

**integrate**, v. to end a policy that keeps apart people of different races; to make a place open to everyone

Black neighborhoods thrived in other parts of the state, too. Near Duluth, Black Minnesotans found work in the railroad industry as well as in shipping and mining. In Fergus Falls, new Black residents migrated from Kentucky after they were recruited to the town by a local real estate agent. There, they started farms and businesses, built homes, and started churches. Prince Albert Honeycutt, Fergus Falls' first Black resident, even ran for mayor in 1896.


**This artwork at the Weisman Art Museum in Minneapolis showcases some of the businesses that were once part of the thriving neighborhood of Rondo. Nearly the entire neighborhood was wiped out when Highway 94 was built through St. Paul in the 1950s. More than six hundred Rondo residents were displaced.**

The arts in Minnesota also saw great transformation during the Progressive Era. When the new Minneapolis Institute of Arts opened in 1914, its founding director Joseph Breck described museums as "prison[s] of the arts," experiences meant for a select few. But this new institute would be accessible as both a museum and an art school. It is now known as the Minneapolis Institute of Art, or simply "Mia." It still includes an art college, and it is still open and free to everyone.

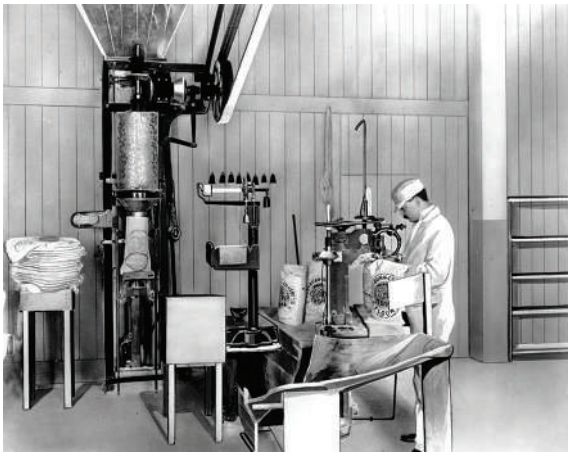
## The First World War

In 1914, the First World War broke out in Europe. It involved so many countries and had such wide-reaching effects that it was once called "the war to end all wars." Allied countries

included Great Britain, France, and Russia. They went to war against Germany and the Central powers, including the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires. For most of the war, the United States remained neutral, not taking a side. It finally entered the war on the side of the Allies in 1917. Minnesota sent seventeen thousand troops to fight in Europe as part of the first wave of American soldiers.

Back at home, Minnesotans worked to support the war effort. They raised money and consumed less so goods could be sent to those fighting in Europe. The flour mills along the Mississippi River in Minneapolis also became even more important. In 1916, just before the United States entered the war, the mills along what is now called St. Anthony Falls produced 18.5 million barrels of flour. This accounted for 20 percent of all flour produced in the United States that year.

The war had negative consequences at home, too. Minnesota's large immigrant population from Germany was targeted. Germans were the largest ethnic minority group in Minnesota at the time. People were concerned that they would be loyal to Germany and turn on their new homeland. As a consequence, they were required to



**Flour factories in Minnesota helped supply a hungry world with food during the First World War.**

register as alien enemies and carry a registration card at all times. Some German men were attacked by mobs. Others were watched closely by the Minnesota Commission of Public Safety. The commission was formed in 1917 to ensure Americans supported the war effort—and identify those who did not. In Minnesota's school classrooms, the German language was not banned (as it was in other states), but Minnesota's leaders passed a law requiring English to be the main language used in classroom instruction.

The year 1918 was especially difficult in Minnesota. More than 1,400 Minnesotans died in battle in western Europe. In addition, more than ten thousand Minnesotans died from the flu pandemic that spread that same year. More disaster followed. In October of 1918, a massive wildfire tore through 1,500 miles in northeastern Minnesota. It killed hundreds and left thousands more without homes. On top of all of this, the circumstances of the war and the need to supply the national war effort were causing hardships at home. Minnesotans were dealing with shortages of food as supplies were sent to soldiers overseas. Although the First World War ended in November 1918 and American soldiers were able to return home, the decade ended as one of difficulty and desperation for many Minnesotans.

## The Roaring Twenties and the Stock Market Crash

In the 1920s, the nation exhaled after years of war and disease. The "Roaring Twenties" was a decade of economic prosperity and cultural freedom for many. Jazz music, radios, and movies became popular. Women's fashion changed dramatically. Some women,

called “flappers,” cut their hair short and wore shorter dresses as a sign of independence.

But if the 1920s were marked by a carefree ease and wealth, the end of the decade was the exact opposite. On October 28, 1929, the stock market fell by nearly 13 percent. The huge financial boom of the 1920s meant that more people had invested money in the stock market. Having more money in the market meant that people had a lot more money to lose. The next day, which came to be known as “Black Tuesday,” the stock market lost $14 billion. The government was not sure how to react. It had no safety nets in place. People lost their entire savings.

The stock market crash led to **deflation**. People had no money to spend, so demand for goods went down. In some cases, this caused the situation to worsen.

**Vocabulary**

**deflation**, n. a decrease in the cost of goods and services

**The crash of the stock market led many people to lose their jobs and sometimes their homes. Many traveled to other places to try to find work. This Minnesota woman and her children traveled all the way to Washington looking for a job.**

Decreased demand for products meant workers of industrial jobs such as in the flour mills in Minneapolis and shipyards in Duluth saw their wages decrease or even lost their jobs altogether. These extreme economic conditions ultimately brought about the most significant financial crisis in American history: the Great Depression.

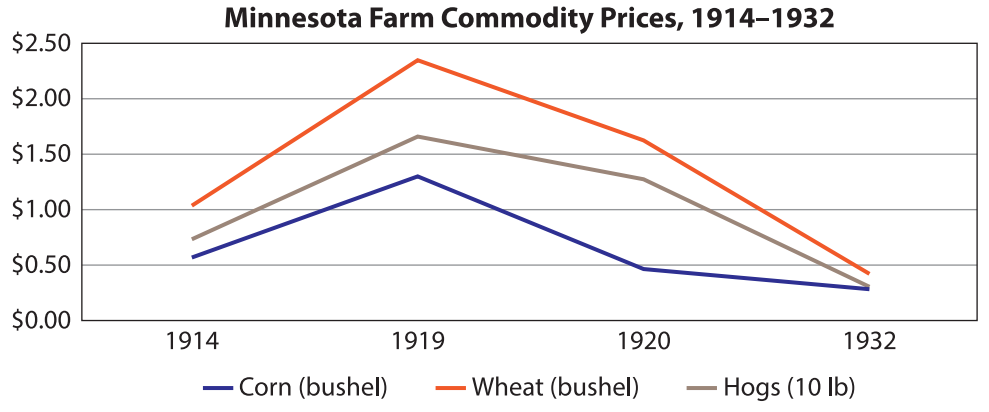
## The Great Depression and the New Deal

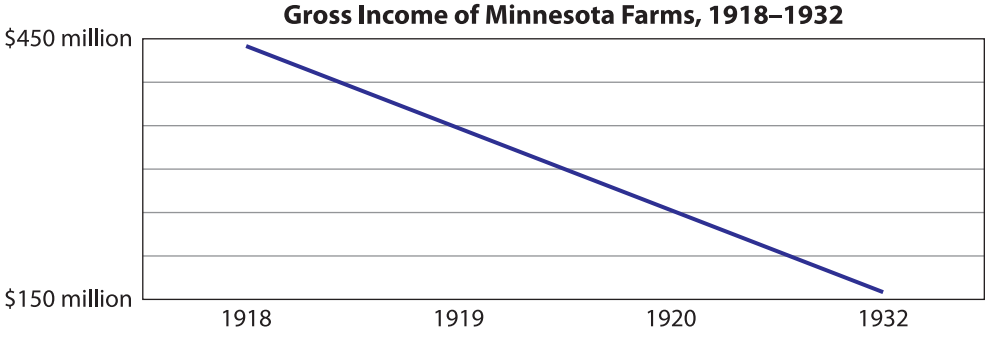
By 1933, the unemployment rate in the United States had reached 25 percent. The rates were even higher for members of the working class, such as miners on the Iron Range, whose unemployment rate hit 70 percent.

Farm workers felt the Depression strongly as well. Minnesota had been in the midst of an agricultural depression since 1920. The war years had increased the demand for agricultural products. When the war ended and demand for goods went back down, there were suddenly too many farmers, especially in agriculture-dependent states like Minnesota.

In towns such as Fergus Falls that had once been home to successful Black farmers and business owners, many people felt such economic strain that they moved away. In Minneapolis, the unemployment rate in some low-income neighborhoods was higher than the national average. All corners of Minnesota felt the Great Depression more deeply and for a longer period of time than much of the rest of the country.

Overall, nearly 90 percent of businesses experienced some sort of loss by the beginning of the Great Depression. With so many Minnesotans




**As prices for agricultural commodities—or raw materials such as plants and animals—fell, so did the income of Minnesota farmers.**

experiencing unemployment and uncertainty, labor unions formed and workers went on strike. With no end to the poor financial situation in sight, violence erupted. In the summer of 1934, police opened fire on striking workers in Minneapolis, wounding sixty-seven picketers and killing two, in a day known as "Bloody Friday."

In 1932, when the Depression was at its worst, Franklin Delano Roosevelt was elected president. After he took office, the U.S. government began a series of projects to put people back to work. The whole program was called the New Deal.

The New Deal included a program called the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). It put young men to work on public lands, providing

them with housing and teaching them new skills. Minnesota had 148 CCC camps that employed more than seventy-seven thousand workers. The Indian Emergency Conservation Work (IECW) program also employed local Dakota, Anishinaabe, and other Indigenous Americans. Workers in both programs repaired forests and infrastructure, such as bridges, and they worked on projects to combat soil erosion and floods. The Jay Cooke State Park River Inn, the reconstruction of the Grand Portage Northwest Company fur trading post, and the stepping-stone path across the headwaters of the Mississippi in Itasca State Park were all CCC projects.

**CCC worker Leslie Anderson cuts a notch out of a log that would be part of the new LaCroix Guard Station in Superior National Forest.**

Indigenous populations in Minnesota, including the Dakota and Anishinaabe, also benefited from the CCC. The program reached more than 2,500 Indigenous families. Among other projects, they made wild rice beds more accessible by building log walkways, docks, and canals. Dakota crews also worked on the Pipestone Quarry, which helped set the stage for the site's designation as a national monument in 1937.

The Works Progress Administration (WPA) took on much smaller projects than the CCC. In the summer of 1935, about four

thousand Minnesotans were put to work thanks to the WPA. In 1938, roughly sixty-eight thousand Minnesotans were working on WPA projects. In Minneapolis, WPA workers improved sites still frequented today, including Minnehaha Park, Theodore Wirth Park, and Victory Memorial Drive. By 1942, the WPA had helped to refurbish 113 public schools and pave sixty miles (96.5 km) of Minneapolis streets.

Public works projects weren't the only outcome of the New Deal programs. The arts benefited as well. The WPA provided work and direct financial support to writers, musicians, and visual artists. Among other projects, WPA artists created images that are still some of the most iconic representations of America's noteworthy outdoor spaces.

The Federal One project expanded the WPA even further with more investment in cultural programs. In Minneapolis, this included theater performances in city parks, an educational program at the Minneapolis Art Center, and band concerts at Lake Harriet, which are still quite popular today.

These programs are all seen as successful, both in their time and in the lasting impact they continue to have. But it would not be until the middle of the twentieth century, when the world once again went to war, that Minnesota and the rest of the country would fully recover from the Great Depression.

# Chapter 8
# Fighting for Freedom

**Big Question**

How did Minnesotans fight for freedom in the second half of the twentieth century?

**Freedom in Minnesota and Abroad** Fort Snelling, the first permanent outpost built in the place that would become Minnesota, saw its most active years in the middle of the twentieth century. When the United States finally joined the conflict that was already raging in Europe, the fort was central to the war effort once more.

When new military recruits from Minnesota arrived at Fort Snelling in 1941, they would have passed through a series of buildings that had been refurbished to handle the incredible volume of new enlisted soldiers. By the end of the following year, more than 260 additional buildings had been constructed around the fort. Recruits would have found hastily built places to sleep, train, and learn. They would have been surrounded by offices, warehouses, and the more than seven hundred employees it took to manage the fort and process all those new soldiers.


The army quickly built induction stations all over the country to handle the wave of new recruits.

Fort Snelling became the largest induction center in the Midwest. Induction centers were bases where new recruits received their initial training and equipment and were examined for their fitness and suitability for special roles. For the duration of the war, Fort Snelling was busier than it had ever been. When the war ended and the nature of the military and conflicts changed over the course of the century, it was finally retired.

## The Second World War

Just twenty years after the "war to end all wars" ended, an international crisis once again developed into a world war. The destruction of World War I, and the Depression that followed, caused extreme hardship in many countries, as well as the rise of extreme political movements and leaders. In Japan, nationalists took over the government and directed the country's energies toward creating an empire. The Japanese invaded the region of Manchuria in 1931 and China in 1937. In Europe, something very similar happened. Germany had been driven to ruin after World War I. As the crisis worsened, its democratic government was taken over by Adolf Hitler and the Nazis. Like Japan, Hitler sought to solve Germany's problems by building an empire. One by one, Germany invaded the countries of Europe. On September 1, 1939, it invaded Poland. Britain and France declared war on Germany in defense of Poland. This was the beginning of World War II in Europe. Britain, France, and later the Soviet Union formed the Allies. Germany joined with Japan and Italy to form the Axis.

Just as in World War I, the United States did not enter the war at first. President Roosevelt wanted to support Great Britain and

sent supplies to the country, but the idea of going to war in Europe was very unpopular. It was Japan's actions that finally forced the United States to become directly involved. Japanese leaders feared that while the United States was wary of intervening Europe, it would continue to interfere in Japan's empire-building in China, East Asia, and the Pacific Islands. After Japan invaded China in 1937, the United States took a series of steps to hurt the Japanese economy. In 1940, the United States blocked sales of iron, steel, and airplane fuel to Japan. In 1941, it cut off Japan's access to American oil. In retaliation, on December 7, 1941, Japan launched a surprise attack on the U.S. naval base in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Many American ships were sunk and American service members killed. The next day, the United States joined the war on the side of the Allies.

**Almost ten thousand Minnesotans died during World War II. Many others, such as Corporal Duane T. Moen of Minneapolis—pictured here fighting in Leghorn, Italy—were able to make it home.**

Once again, Fort Snelling became Minnesota's hub for military activity. It was used as a recruitment and training center. It processed more than 300,000 new service members, up to eight hundred a day at its peak. Male and female recruits were sworn in at Fort Snelling. They received their medical examinations, obtained

the equipment they needed, and were assigned to specific units. They were then transferred to other posts to begin basic training.

Near the end of the war, Fort Snelling was also the home of the Military Intelligence Service Language School. There, Japanese Americans learned languages such as Japanese and Korean to work as interpreters and intelligence workers. The contribution of these Japanese Americans was all the more remarkable because of the U.S. policy of internment during the war. Because of fears that Japanese Americans would be disloyal to the United States, those living on the West Coast were rounded up and imprisoned in internment camps in places such as Utah and Arizona. Serving in the military or working for intelligence services were ways for some Japanese Americans to avoid the camps.

The Japanese Americans who took up roles at the Military Intelligence Service Language School were part of a generation called the Nisei. Nisei were American citizens whose parents had immigrated from Japan. When a piece of information from the Japanese military was intercepted, the Nisei

**More than thirty-three thousand Japanese Americans volunteered to fight during World War II, including those who worked as language interpreters at Fort Snelling.**

could decipher it. Information of this kind was critical to the war effort. Knowing Japanese plans allowed American forces to counteract them swiftly. This contribution undoubtedly saved many American lives and helped win the war.

Fort Snelling was also home to a group of female Nisei service members as well. They worked as **linguists** alongside their male counterparts. Other women also enlisted in the army. Minnesota native Virginia Lane Frazier worked with a unit called the 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion. It was the only all-Black female unit that was sent to Europe during the war. She was one of the first female soldiers to

**Vocabulary**

**linguist**, n. a person skilled in foreign languages

**Virginia Lane Frazier and her fellow soldiers in the 6888th were not allowed to serve alongside white soldiers.**

enlist. Her unit cleared a backlog of mail so that soldiers from all over the country could receive letters from loved ones back home. Many other women served as nurses and journalists. Some even worked as spies. Still, most women supported the war by working back home. Significant numbers of women worked as factory workers and riveters and in other fields typically dominated by men.

Minnesota supported the war in other ways, too. The mines of the Iron Range provided about 70 percent of the iron ore that the United States used during the war. Steel production in America tripled from 1938 to 1943. It created new ships, weapons, and other tools of war.

Minnesota farmers and businesses also helped fight the war from home. Companies such as General Mills had helped Minneapolis grow into a major city. They now helped teach Americans how to grow and process their own food and to survive on **rations**. Farther south in Austin, Minnesota, Hormel Foods' canned meat, Spam, became an important food supply for the United States and its allies. Throughout Minnesota and the rest of the country, about 400,000 German prisoners of war worked on farms. They provided raw materials to General Mills, Hormel, and others. They did much of the manual labor usually done by the Americans who were fighting overseas.

**Vocabulary**

**ration**, n. a fixed amount of a resource officially allowed to each person during a time of shortage, often in wartime

On May 8, 1945, Germany officially surrendered to end the war in Europe. In August 1945, the United States dropped two atomic bombs on Japan. On September 2, Japan surrendered.

## The Cold War

> **Vocabulary**
>
> **communist**, adj. relating to communism, an economic system based on community ownership of property and industry

The development and use of nuclear weapons such as atomic bombs not only ended World War II, they also contributed to the conflict that followed. Even though they had been allies during the war, the Soviet Union and the United States did not trust each other. The democratic government and capitalist economy of America stood in stark contrast to the **communist** government of the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union was a kind of dictatorship, built on government control of the economy and much of society. The United States and Soviet Union saw one another as a threat. This led to a long-term conflict called the Cold War. The conflict was considered "cold" because the countries never fought directly. Instead, they each supported governments, movements, and militias friendly to their cause around the world and interfered in conflicts if they thought it would harm the interests of the other side.

One of the reasons the Cold War never turned "hot" was that both sides possessed nuclear weapons. Soviet leaders were afraid that the United States would use nuclear weapons against them—and decided they needed nuclear weapons of their own. The Soviets spied on the American scientists who created the atomic bombs. They were successful in creating their own nuclear weapons program. Both sides, soon joined by France, Great Britain, and China, scrambled to build more and more nuclear weapons. These weapons were stockpiled as part of a strategy of nuclear deterrence. The idea of deterrence was that if your opponent knew you could

retaliate and destroy them completely, then they would never attack you in the first place, and vice versa.


**Signs in public buildings pointed people to areas where they could keep safe during a nuclear attack.**

During the Cold War, from the 1950s to the fall of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s, Minnesotans lived in fear of a nuclear attack by the Soviet Union. No such attack ever occurred, but the fear was real, and many steps were taken to prepare the public for the worst. Most public buildings in Minnesota designated certain spaces as fallout shelters. The word *fallout* refers to the radioactive dust and debris kicked up into the atmosphere by the detonation of a nuclear weapon. Such fallout would be dangerous for days, months, and even years after an attack. Fallout shelters were designed as sealed spaces, often in basements, where people could shelter from an attack and wait until the danger of fallout had passed.

For most of the Cold War, it was believed that such an attack would be launched by large planes called bombers flying across the northern border of the United States. All around the country, the military built command stations, both as a means of protection and as a demonstration of strength. Six radar stations were placed

across Minnesota to detect an enemy attack. In Duluth, the North American Air Defense Command (NORAD) positioned armed jets that could intercept enemy bombers with little notice. Antiaircraft missiles were placed in the town of Knife River, just north of Duluth along Lake Superior. They were meant to protect Duluth's ore and steel from potential attack.

As the Cold War stretched into the 1960s, the United States engaged in another violent conflict. In the 1950s, Vietnam became embroiled in a civil war between the communist north and the authoritarian south. The United States, fearing the spread of communism, supported South Vietnam. In the early 1960s, it began sending U.S. troops to defend South Vietnam. By 1969, there were 540,000 U.S. troops in Vietnam. The conflict lasted until 1975, when the communists ultimately declared victory. Roughly 68,000 Minnesotans served in Vietnam. More than one thousand of them did not survive. Today, many Vietnam veterans still deal with the effects of toxic chemicals they were exposed to during the conflict.

The conflict in Vietnam became very unpopular in the United States. Veterans returned home to hostility from people who opposed the war. Especially on college campuses, people protested the war.

## Struggles for Rights at Home

In the Cold War, the United States emphasized rights, democracy, and freedoms to contrast with the Soviet Union and its allies. But many in the United States noticed that this language stood in contrast to

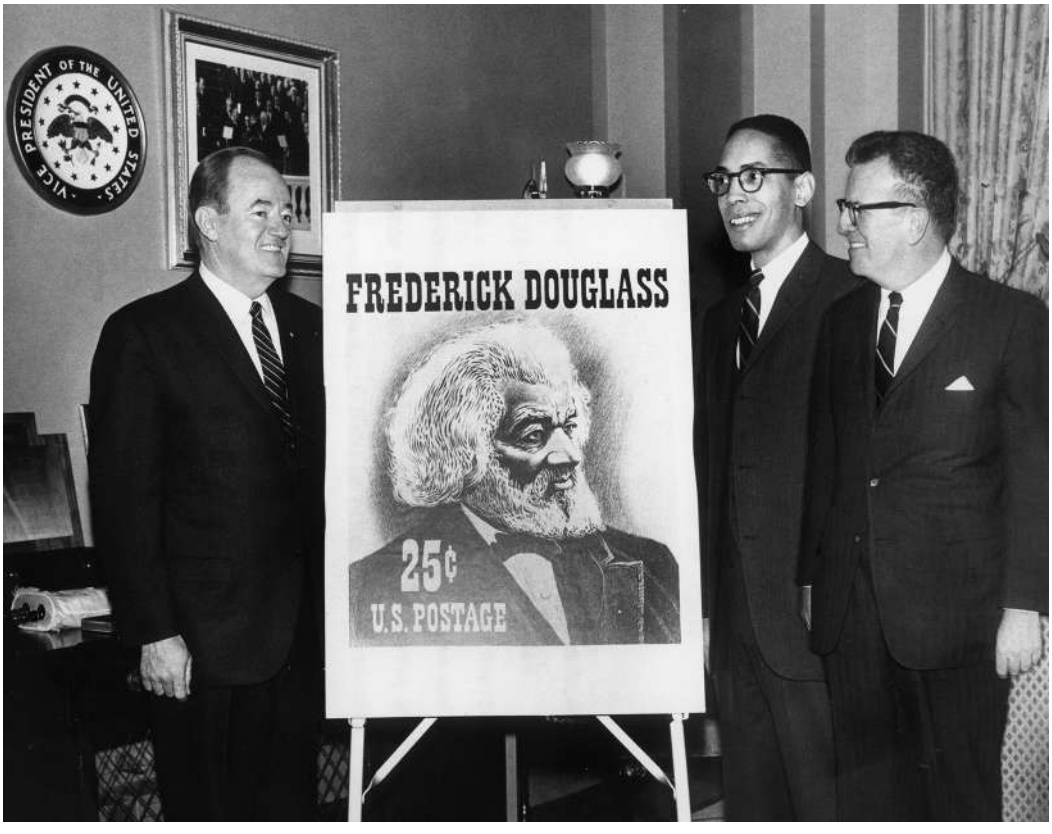
significant inequalities in the United States. Black soldiers who had volunteered to fight in World War II were treated as second-class citizens once they returned. In some parts of the country, Black people could not even use the same bathrooms as white people or sit in the same areas on the bus. In nearly every city and state, they were discriminated against in employment. In Minnesota, racially focused housing covenants and discriminatory lending practices meant that African American citizens were actively prevented from buying homes, even when they had the money to do so.

Minnesota's Black community had campaigned for civil rights for decades before the national civil rights movement grew in the middle of the twentieth century. Minnesota's civil rights leaders pushed back against discrimination. Fredrick L. McGhee was a prominent Minnesota trial lawyer at the beginning of the twentieth century. He founded the Niagara Movement in 1905 with national leader W. E. B. Du Bois. The Niagara Movement was an organization devoted to ending segregation and unequal treatment of Black Americans. It later gave birth to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), a prominent civil rights organization that still exists today.

In the aftermath of World War II, a national civil rights movement gathered momentum. The movement and its members challenged segregationist laws and policies and sought legal protections for the civil rights and freedoms of Black Americans. Many of these policies were in place in the South, where segregation laws denied Black Americans access to the same facilities and rights as white Americans. But segregation and unequal treatment existed

nationwide, including in Minnesota. The Reverend Denzil A. Carty fought against discrimination in housing by lobbying the Minnesota legislature to pass the Minnesota Fair Housing Act in 1961. He also called for the desegregation of Minnesota schools. Nellie Stone Johnson was a union leader who worked for equal rights for Black Minnesotans, including women. She also believed education was the key to economic security.

On the national stage, Minnesotan Hubert H. Humphrey worked for civil rights during his term as vice president by speaking out for equality. In 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the




**Minnesotan Hubert H. Humphrey was central to many of the civil rights reforms of the 1960s. Here, he is pictured with the great-great grandson of anti-slavery advocate Frederick Douglass.**

first Civil Rights Act of 1964. It aimed to prohibit discrimination based on race in employment. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 soon followed. It outlawed practices such as voting taxes and tests. But demonstrations and violence persisted. In 1967, the nation experienced a "long, hot summer." Civil unrest and riots broke out everywhere, including North Minneapolis. Civil rights were finally expanded in 1968 to prohibit discrimination in housing. The 1968 Fair Housing Act outlawed the lending practices that had prevented so many African American Minnesotans from owning homes.

In 1963, the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom brought about 250,000 people to Washington, D.C. The event was planned in part by St. Paul resident Roy Wilkins. Civil rights activists from around the country, including Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., marched for equal rights for Black Americans, especially in terms of employment. Dr. King delivered his famous "I Have a Dream" speech from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial as part of the historic event.

Musical activists were also part of the March on Washington. One of them was Minnesotan Bob Dylan, who performed four songs just before Dr. King's famous speech. Other musicians included Joan Baez, the "Queen

**Joan Baez and Hibbing, Minnesota, native Bob Dylan performed at the March on Washington in 1963. Folk music was a powerful tool of protest in the 1960s.**

of Gospel" Mahalia Jackson, and Marian Anderson, who had performed an opera at the Lincoln Memorial five years earlier that had a significant influence on Dr. King.

## The Americans with Disabilities Act

The civil rights movement was not the only fight for equal rights in the late twentieth century. One of the most important victories was the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). It was signed into law


**Groups such as the Bloomington Human Rights Commission and the Minnesota State Council on Disability held rallies in July 2015 to mark the anniversary of the passing of the ADA.**

on July 26, 1990. It provides civil rights protections by prohibiting discrimination against people with disabilities. The ADA guarantees that people with disabilities have the same access to employment and all government services and programs. This access includes physical access, such as wheelchair ramps and braille. It also includes less tangible access, like accommodations for those with an intellectual disability. In 2008, an amendment to the ADA broadened the definition of disability to include those for whom more basic life activities such as reading and communicating may be challenging.

In 2015, Minnesota and the rest of the country celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of the ADA. People with disabilities and their families and supporters marched and held rallies in cities such as New York, Bloomington, and St. Paul. Artists such as Josh Paisley in Minnesota created paintings and other works to commemorate the historic civil rights measure.

## Immigration to Minnesota

After the end of the Vietnam War, many people from Vietnam and surrounding countries fled to the United States. The United States arranged for roughly 125,000 people to evacuate in 1975. Many more came in the 1980s. Minnesota currently has approximately 23,000 Vietnamese residents.

The Vietnamese were not the only ones to flee Southeast Asia because of the war. Laos, one of Vietnam's neighbors, not only experienced effects of the Vietnam War, it also experienced its own communist revolution. As a result, many of Laos's Hmong

people fled to the United States. Many of them settled in Minnesota in large part because of resettlement agencies such as Catholic Charities and Lutheran Social Services. The Twin Cities area now has the largest concentration of Hmong people in the United States.

Immigrants from other Asian countries found safety and opportunity in Minnesota as well. Many Koreans came for education or work. Others were brought to the state as children through international adoption. Similarly, immigrants from India came to Minnesota to pursue educational degrees, especially at the University of Minnesota. They then settled into professional jobs and life in surrounding suburbs.

**Most of the Hmong immigrants from Laos have settled in St. Paul, where there are now vibrant Hmong marketplaces and cultural festivals.**

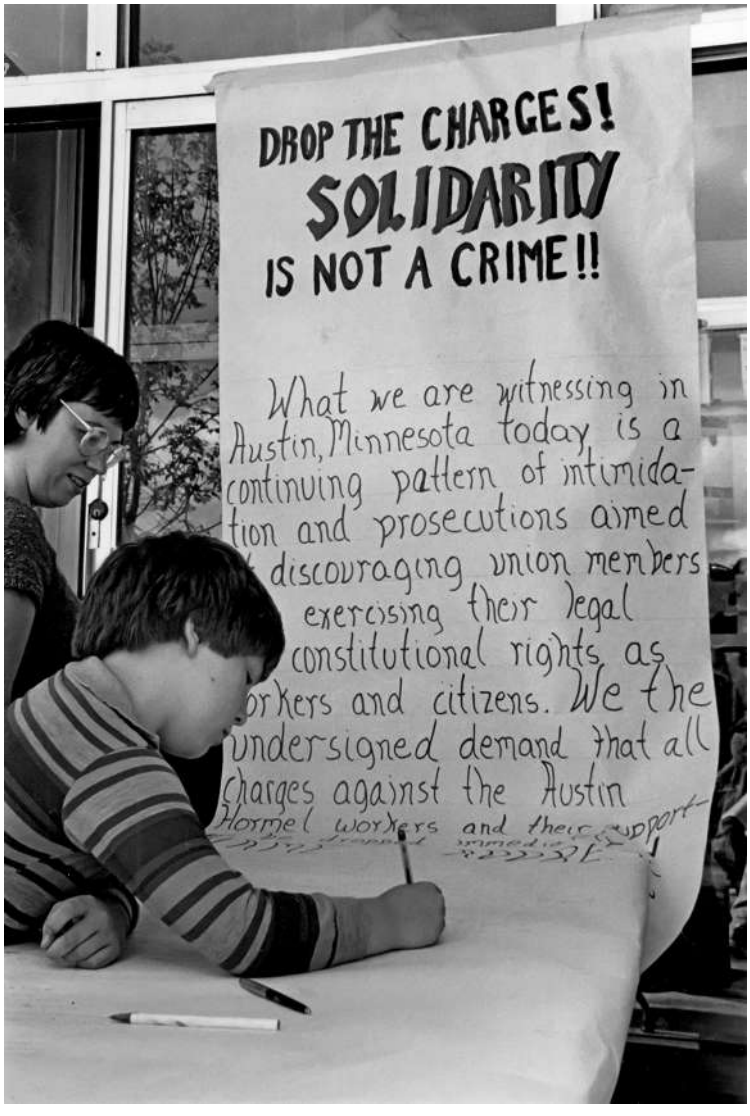
## The Labor Movement in the Late Twentieth Century

Industries that were once strong saw a great shift in the late twentieth century. In Minneapolis, the once-mighty Washburn A Mill closed in 1965. As technology changed, mills no longer needed to be built next to water as a source of power. Changes in transportation rates and tariffs forced the mill to close and immediately lay off all its employees. On the Iron Range in the north, the steel industry, which was once such a vital part of the war effort, fell into a state of decline. By the 1980s, the demand for iron ore had dropped so sharply that many mines were closed, and many employees were laid off. As families moved away to find new lines of work, schools districts in towns like Virginia and Eveleth were combined.

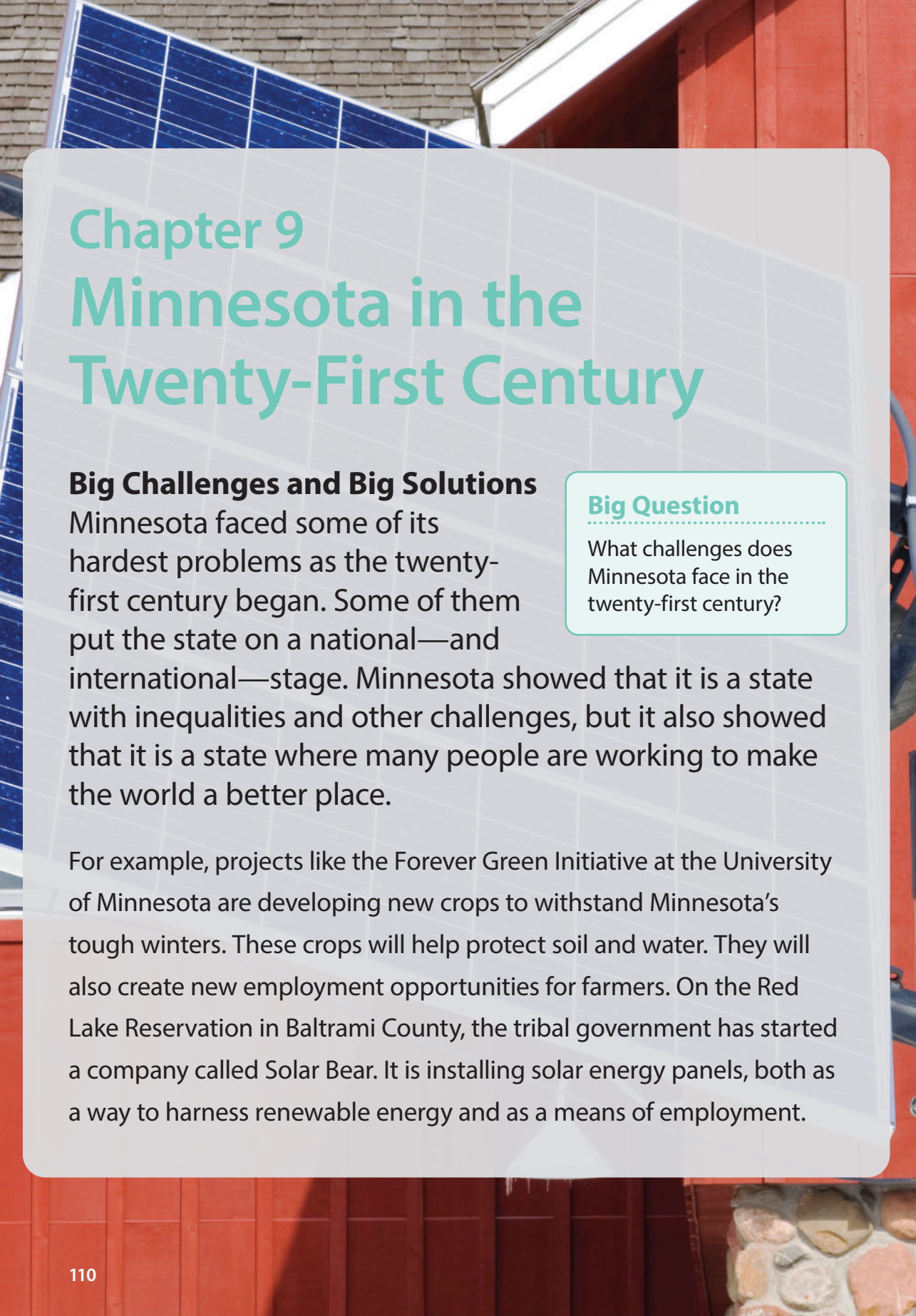
This shifting labor economy forced workers in some industries to push back. In 1970, 2,200 Minneapolis Public Schools teachers went on strike to demand higher pay and smaller class sizes. But at the time, their strike was illegal. Public employees did not have the same bargaining rights as private employees. The next year, the Minnesota legislature passed the Public Employment Labor Relations Act. It gave public employees such as teachers the same collective bargaining rights as private-sector unions. When new bargaining laws took effect in 1981, the teachers in thirty-five of Minnesota's 434 school districts went on strike.

In the 1980s, the private sector also saw the impact of unions and collective bargaining. The economic downturn of the early 1980s put a pinch on the meat-packing industry, including Minnesota-based Hormel Foods. In 1985, when the company pushed for a

23 percent cut on wages that had been frozen since 1977, about 1,500 workers walked out on strike. The leaders of the strike were arrested on charges of aiding and abetting a riot. The strike lasted more than a year before employees simply could no longer afford not to work.




**Across Minnesota, union workers rallied in support of the striking Hormel workers.**



# Chapter 9
# Minnesota in the Twenty-First Century

## Big Challenges and Big Solutions

**Big Question**

What challenges does Minnesota face in the twenty-first century?

Minnesota faced some of its hardest problems as the twenty-first century began. Some of them put the state on a national—and international—stage. Minnesota showed that it is a state with inequalities and other challenges, but it also showed that it is a state where many people are working to make the world a better place.

For example, projects like the Forever Green Initiative at the University of Minnesota are developing new crops to withstand Minnesota's tough winters. These crops will help protect soil and water. They will also create new employment opportunities for farmers. On the Red Lake Reservation in Baltrami County, the tribal government has started a company called Solar Bear. It is installing solar energy panels, both as a way to harness renewable energy and as a means of employment.

In 2018, about 25 percent of Minnesota's energy was renewable. In 2024, that number increased to 33 percent.

## Minnesota in the New Millennium

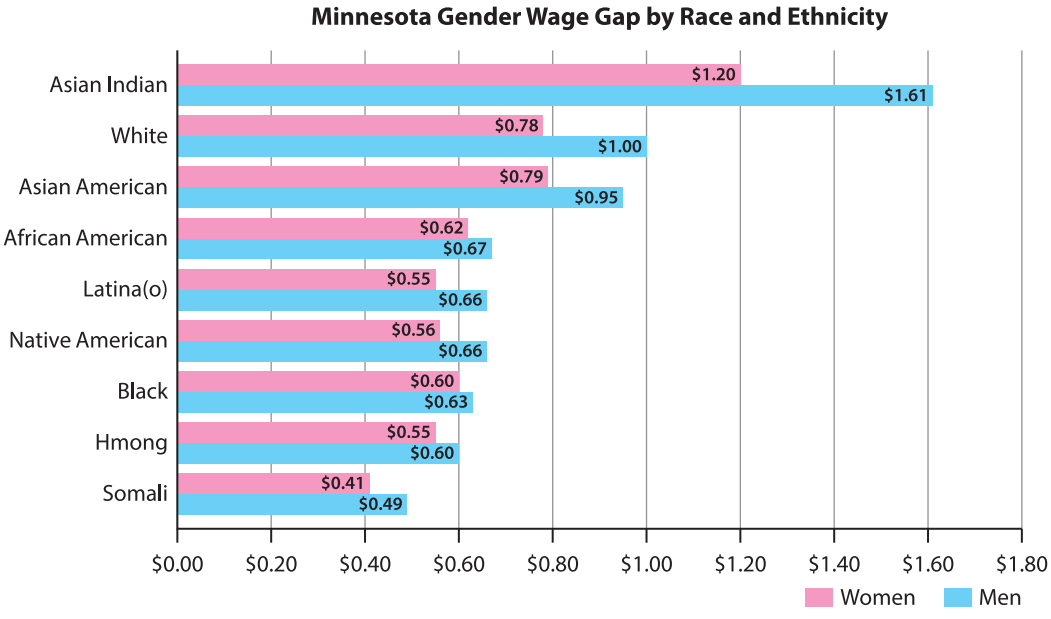
As Minnesota moved into the twenty-first century, it still carried the economic problems that led to the labor strikes of the decades before. By 2020, two of the once-mighty taconite mines on the Iron Range had closed. All of Minnesota's mines have ceased operation at least once. They all employ fewer people than when the industry was at its peak. Overall, Minnesota's gross domestic product (GDP), or the total value of all goods and services, grew at only half the rate of the United States' total GDP from 2019 to 2022. Minnesota has tried to address its economic troubles in many ways, especially those on the Iron Range. The Minnesota 21st Century Fund was created in 2024 to provide loans for these industries. It also invests in steel manufacturing and technology on the Iron Range.

But income gaps still remain. This is especially true for marginalized groups. In 2022, Minnesota's **median** household income was $84,313. That rate was just $45,289 for Indigenous Minnesotans. It was $49,738 for Black Minnesotans. Gaps are present for women, too. In Minnesota, women make an average of seventy-nine cents for every dollar made by men, one of the largest wage gaps in the country. Most of the workers in Minnesota earning at or below minimum wage are women. This is especially true outside the Twin Cities. The pay **disparity** is even more significant for women of color, older women, and LGBTQ+ people.

### Vocabulary

**median**, n. the middle number in a set of sorted numbers

**disparity**, n. a difference in levels that is often considered to be unfair




**Professions that many women choose often pay them lower wages. Some also choose to take time away from the workforce and therefore have less experience. But pay discrimination is also a significant factor.**

Despite the challenges, people in Minnesota are working to level the gender playing field in the workplace. The Women's Foundation of Minnesota advocates for policies in the state that seek to close the wage gap. It works on behalf of women in other ways as well. Individuals such as Rosalyn Park, director of the Women's Human Rights Program (within the Advocates for Human Rights organization) in Minnesota, also work toward gender equality. Park is recognized internationally for her work to fight violence against women.

Similar gaps also exist in Minnesota's schools. The state has some of the country's largest achievement gaps. These gaps include graduation rates, performance on standardized tests, and grades. Nearly everywhere, white students tend to achieve at a higher rate

than students of color. **Affluent** students tend to achieve at a higher rate than those who come from less affluent families. These gaps have lasted for decades, despite efforts to close the gaps, such as allowing for more school choice and raising teachers' salaries.

**Vocabulary**

**affluent**, adj. having a great deal of money; wealthy

Still, there is hope that these achievement gaps can be lessened and maybe even closed. School systems that have successfully narrowed achievement gaps tend to focus on smaller, more specialized solutions. They do not look for just one approach to fix the entire problem. The Minnesota legislature and Department of Education are giving more freedom to school districts to develop systems that will work for their students. One measure that has been successful is simply to make sure students come to school every day.

## A Changing Climate

Climate change is another issue that has caught the attention of Minnesotans. Just as the melting of glaciers created Minnesota's distinctive landscape of lakes and waterways thousands of years ago, scientists predict that further changes in climate caused by human-made greenhouse gases will cause serious harm to life and the environment in Minnesota. Given the scientific evidence and public pressure, the state government decided to take action by creating the Climate Action Framework. More than three thousand people gave feedback to help build the plan. It aims to reduce **greenhouse gas emissions**

**Vocabulary**

**greenhouse gas emissions** (phrase) substances that are released into the air that trap heat from the sun in Earth's atmosphere

by 50 percent by the year 2030. It aims to have net-zero emissions by the year 2050. This means that any new emissions must be balanced by other emissions being removed.

The city of St. Paul has created a plan of its own. It adopted its Climate Action and Resilience Plan in 2019. Its goals are very similar to the state's goals. The city additionally focuses on energy and water use. It gives citizens things they can do every day to be part of the solution. For example, it calls on groups of citizens to plant trees in their communities.

Farther north, on the border with Fargo, North Dakota, the city of Moorhead has experienced many floods from the Red River. In response, the city has engaged in a Climate Change Resilience Study. The aim is to help people who are impacted by flooding due to climate change.

**Red River flooding due to climate change has affected Moorhead.**

Across the state, tribal governments are also helping address climate change. They have helped set goals. Leaders have shared their knowledge and historical perspectives, as well as their understanding of the land and their peoples' needs.

## Twenty-First Century Immigrants

From 2001 to 2022, the Census Bureau's Population Estimates Program reported that more people moved to Minnesota than left it. This net gain has created a need for more services. It has also helped make Minnesota a more culturally vibrant place to live.

One of the largest groups to immigrate to Minnesota in the twenty-first century have been from Somalia. Since the 1980s, the people of Somalia have been in the midst of a civil war. Many people have fled Somalia to keep their families safe. But the way out was not always easy. Many refugees, including Congresswoman Ilhan Omar, spent time in refugee camps in places such as Kenya before being approved to enter the United States. Minnesota now has the largest Somali community in North America, mostly in Minneapolis. The Cedar-Riverside neighborhood has even been dubbed "Little Somalia" because of the

**Minnesota Congresswoman Ilhan Omar came to the United States as a refugee.**

significant Somali population and the many stores and restaurants that Somali migrants have opened there.

Resettlement agencies such Catholic Charities and Lutheran Social Services have contributed to the numbers of Somali immigrants to Minnesota. Groups like Ka Joog have helped Somalis form community once they arrive. *Ka joog* means "stay away" because the group helps young people stay away from things like drugs and violence. Instead, it guides Somali youth toward healthy choices, such as education and community involvement. It also organizes an annual Somali Week event, the community's largest celebration. It honors Somali Independence Day with arts festivals over the course of an entire week in the summer.

Somali immigrants have made a home together in Minnesota, but they have also contributed to the state's larger culture. Food often serves as the first introduction between people and their new immigrant neighbors. In Somalia, sambusas are often saved for special occasions. In Minnesota, the deep-fried triangle doughs filled with beef or lentils have become a widespread staple. This is due in large part to Mariam Mohamed and her company, which makes frozen sambusas. Mohamed founded Hoyo, which is Somali for "mother," as a way

**The Cinco de Mayo—or the Fifth of May—festival in St. Paul is one of many celebrations of Mexican culture in the United States.**

to enrich the lives of struggling Somali women. Now, Hoyo sambusas are available at grocery stores throughout the upper Midwest. They are even served in school cafeterias across Minnesota, introducing thousands of children to one of their state's newest cultures.

Many new immigrants to Minnesota have also come from Latin America. After white and African American Minnesotans, Latinos are the third-largest group in the state. Two-thirds of Minnesota Latinos have come from Mexico. That number has grown by more than 140 percent in the first part of the twenty-first century. As a result, flourishing neighborhoods have been established in Minneapolis and St. Paul, as well as suburbs such as Shakopee and throughout the state.

## Injustice and Inequality

Minnesota's population is becoming more and more diverse. At the same time, like many other states, its people also experience inequality, injustice, and discrimination.

As in other parts of the United States, Black Minnesotans are more likely to be stopped by police and arrested. Minnesota has the largest imprisonment disparity in the entire country. Black Minnesotans in prison outnumber white Minnesotans at a rate of nineteen to one.

The same holds true for Minnesota's young people. Of all young people who were arrested, 35 percent were Black Minnesotans, even though Black juveniles make up only 11 percent of the state's juvenile population. Hispanic or Latino juveniles are also overrepresented in the state's criminal justice system.


**Murals in memory of George Floyd became symbols of racial protests around the world. Many of them incorporated the words Floyd said more than twenty times while being held to the ground: "I can't breathe."**

Black Minnesotans, like Black people across the country, are also more likely to be victims of police violence. In 2020, the killing of George Floyd by police in North Minneapolis sparked a movement that would become the largest collective protest ever held in the United States. In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, as many as twenty-six million Americans took to the streets to protest racial injustice. These Black Lives Matter protests ultimately became a worldwide phenomenon. Protests for racial justice even broke out in Great Britain, Brazil, Australia, and all over the world.

Unlike many other trials for police violence, the four officers involved in George Floyd's death were all found guilty of various charges. All four were also convicted of breaking federal civil rights laws.

Minnesota's Native American inhabitants also often face injustices in the state. Across the country, Indigenous women and girls are abducted and hurt at a far higher rate than any other group. Their cases also often go uninvestigated. The National Crime Information Center reported that only 116 of the 5,712 cases of missing American Indian and Alaska Native women were investigated in the year 2016. In Minnesota, anywhere from twenty-seven to fifty-four Indigenous women and girls went missing in a given month between the years 2012 and 2020.


**Missing and murdered Indigenous women are often remembered with red ribbons or red paint in the shape of a hand over a mouth. The red hand symbolizes a connection to the spiritual world, but it also showcases the silence of media and law enforcement in the face of these crimes.**

Many of those women go missing from reservations. But many Indigenous people in Minnesota choose to live in other places. In 2024, only about 23 percent of Indigenous Minnesotans lived on a reservation. Nearly a quarter lived in Hennepin and Ramsey Counties, home to Minneapolis, St. Paul, and other major cities. Regardless of where they live, life for Indigenous Americans can be difficult. Centuries of maltreatment have taken their toll, and the Dakota and Anishinaabe in Minnesota suffer some of the worst health in the state. They often do not have access to quality health care and face issues such as food insecurity at a greater rate.

In addition, because they were not allowed to practice their own traditional heath care, many of those traditions have also been lost.

Local nonprofit organizations are helping to break the cycle of economic and health crises among Indigenous Minnesotans. In 2021, award-winning chef Sean Sherman opened his restaurant, Owamni—named for the falls along the Mississippi that gave birth to Minneapolis—as a way to share "decolonized" food, or those foods that were present before Europeans came to Minnesota. He has since also founded North American Traditional Indigenous Food Systems (NATIFS), a nonprofit professional kitchen and training center that helps Indigenous Minnesotans connect to their heritage through food. The purpose of the program is to "be the answer to our ancestors' prayers." NATIFS hopes to one day spread its mission of historical and cultural connections through food beyond Minnesota to Indigenous nations throughout the United States.

# Chapter 10
# Minnesota's Governments

**Big Question**

How do Minnesota's governments work?

## Governments Big and Small

Minnesota is a place where governments of all shapes and sizes work together. Traverse County has a little more than three thousand people, but its residents receive many of the same services as the 1.2 million residents of Hennepin County. Counties are part of a state, which is part of a country. The many different governments of the counties, the state, and the nation work together to help all people.

The eleven Indigenous nations who call Minnesota home also have governments and constitutions to protect their sovereignty, their environment, and the rights of their people. The constitution of the Lower Indian Sioux Community near Morton, Minnesota, spells out protection for natural resources and education in its first few sentences. It also notes how its tribal government works in partnership with the state of Minnesota and the United States.


Governments provide useful services, from transit systems such as this tram, to emergency services, education, infrastructure, and much more.

## The Federal Government

The federal government is the national government, or government of the United States as a whole. The organization of the federal government was determined by the U.S. Constitution. The Constitution lays out three branches of government, each with their own powers and responsibilities. The goal of dividing government in this way is to prevent one branch from becoming more powerful and important than another. This system of checks and balances relies on the members of each branch doing their jobs and defending their own powers and roles.

The **executive** branch is tasked with executing and enforcing the laws of the nation and also with commanding the nation's armed forces and conducting foreign policy. To enforce the law, the executive branch creates federal agencies to carry out federal policies, such as financial and environmental regulation. The executive is headed by the president, who appoints people to head important offices, such as the secretary of state (in charge of diplomacy) and the secretary of defense (in charge of the armed forces). Presidents also have the power to **veto** any law they think should not pass.

Laws are discussed, written, and voted on by Congress, the legislative branch. Congress is made up of the House of Representatives, which is made up of representatives elected from districts across the country, and the Senate, which is made up of two elected representatives from each

**Vocabulary**

**executive**, adj. having the power to carry out and enforce laws

**veto**, v. to reject or refuse to approve a law

state. The legislative branch has a vital role in our nation's government. It has the power to allocate funds and raise (or lower) taxes. It also has the power to confirm or deny people that the executive branch appoints as the heads of federal agencies and as judges. Congress is also consulted on whether the nation should go to war. Only the legislative branch can grant a formal declaration of war.

**Vocabulary**

**judicial**, adj. having the power to decide questions of law

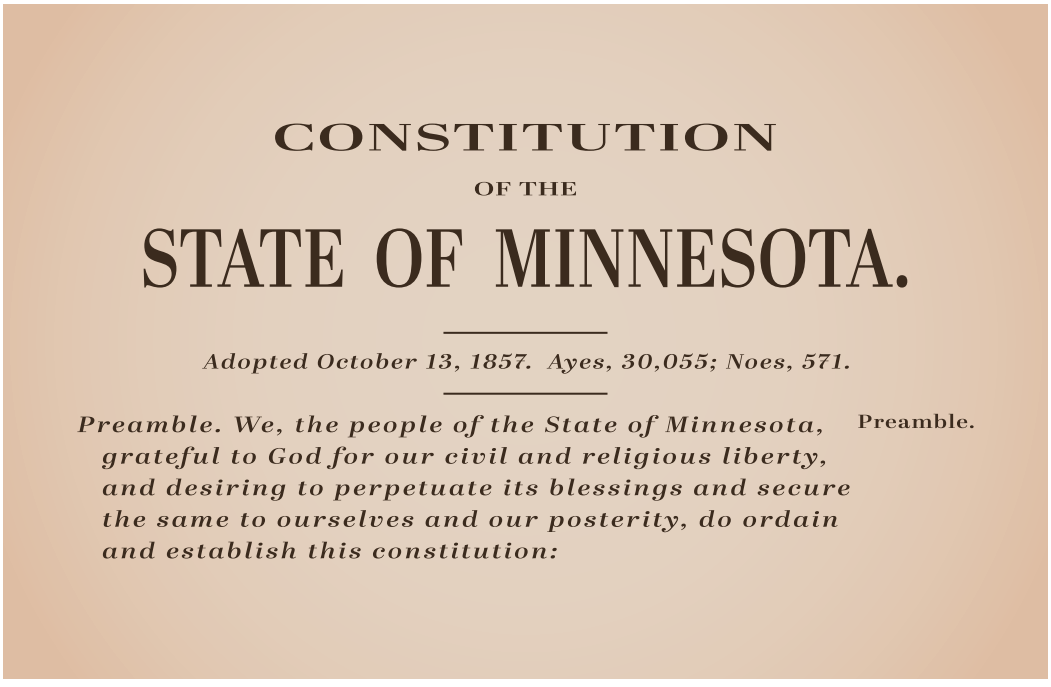
**appeal**, v. to apply to a higher court for a reversal of the decision of a lower court

The **judicial** branch is composed of courts and judges. The role of the judicial branch is to interpret the laws, to hear **appeals**, and in some cases, to rule that laws violate the Constitution and cannot be upheld. The federal judicial branch is headed by the U.S. Supreme Court, which has nine members, appointed for life (or until retirement) by the executive branch.

## Minnesota's State Government

Minnesota's state government makes laws and conducts business in the state, for the state's inhabitants. According to the Tenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, all powers not explicitly granted to the federal government, or denied to the states, are the state's to use. This includes matters like state educational policy, some state laws, and state tax policies.

The organization of Minnesota's government comes from the Minnesota state constitution. Minnesota's constitution has changed a little since it was created in 1858. The language was modernized in 1971. However, the foundations and principles of the constitution



CONSTITUTION

OF THE

STATE OF MINNESOTA.

*Adopted October 13, 1857. Ayes, 30,055; Noes, 571.*

*Preamble. We, the people of the State of Minnesota, grateful to God for our civil and religious liberty, and desiring to perpetuate its blessings and secure the same to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this constitution:*

Preamble.

**The preamble, or opening paragraph, of Minnesota's constitution reads a lot like the federal Constitution.**

remain the same. Much like the Constitution of the United States, the purpose of Minnesota's constitution is to establish how the state is governed. It also outlines the rights and protections of the people. The principles and protections of both documents are largely the same. For example, both constitutions provide for freedom of the press and trial by jury. Still, there are slight differences. For example, while both documents protect freedom of religion, the U.S. Constitution includes it in a clause with other protections. Minnesota's constitution protects freedom of religion in greater detail, over two long sections.

Under the state constitution, Minnesota's state government has a similar structure to the federal government. Minnesota has three branches of government, just like the federal government does. The executive branch includes the governor, attorney general,

**Minnesota's state capitol is in St. Paul.**

and secretary of state. It runs the business of the state. Members of the executive branch make sure laws created by the legislative branch are followed. The governor is an elected official. They must be at least twenty-five years old and have lived in Minnesota for at least one year to run for office. The governor is elected for a four-year term, and there are no limits on how many terms a governor may serve.

The legislative branch includes all state lawmakers in the Minnesota legislature. This is everyone elected to the Minnesota House of Representatives and the Minnesota Senate, as well as their staff. They write and pass laws that the governor then either signs into law or vetoes. The legislative branch can also **override** a veto if it has enough votes to do so.

**Vocabulary**

**override**, v. to use one's authority to reject or cancel

The Minnesota Senate is made up of sixty-seven elected representatives. These representatives are elected to represent districts, which are redrawn (potentially) every ten years. Because of this ten-year cycle, Minnesota state senators run for one two-year term and two four-year terms every ten years. If an election falls on a year ending in two or six, the election is for a four-year term. If the year ends in zero, it is for a two-year term. The districts used to elect senators are also used to create the districts for the Minnesota House of Representatives. There are 134 members of the House of Representatives—two for each senate district because representative districts are created by dividing the senate districts in half. Unlike state senators, state representatives are only ever elected for two-year terms.

The state legislature meets for a session every two years—every odd-numbered year. Sessions begin in January. Sessions cannot last more than 120 days in total. In even-numbered years, the legislature convenes on a date set by joint agreement of the Minnesota House of Representatives and Senate. The governor can also, if needed, call a special session of the legislature if an important matter requires urgent legislation. State legislators also elect the top leaders at the University of Minnesota.

In Minnesota, the judicial branch includes all the courts in the state. Like every other state, the top court in Minnesota is the Supreme Court. One chief justice and six associate judges hear cases that have been appealed. This means lower courts have already made a decision, but the side that did not win asked a higher court to reconsider their case and potentially overturn the decision of the lower court.

**The Minnesota Supreme Court chambers are located inside the state's capitol building. The first case was heard here in 1905.**

The seven members of the Minnesota Supreme Court are elected to serve six-year terms. The only limit on how long a member can serve is the mandatory retirement age of seventy. If a justice dies or retires, the governor can appoint a replacement to serve out the rest of the term. After that, the appointed justice must run for election and win to continue in the job.

One of Minnesota's most famous justices was well known in the state before he even became a lawyer. Justice Alan Page played in four Super Bowls with the Minnesota Vikings. He was even awarded the season's Most Valuable Player award in 1971. He graduated from the University of Minnesota School of Law in 1978, while he was still playing professional football. He went on to serve as a Minnesota Supreme Court justice from 1992 to 2015 and was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2018.

## Local Government in Minnesota

Local governments are responsible for providing services and addressing the needs of citizens at a community level. These are tasks that would be difficult for the state government to do well or quickly. In Minnesota, local governments include the governments of cities, towns, and counties, as well as special districts such as school districts.

Minnesota is divided into eighty-seven counties. These county governments are responsible for tasks such as assessing property taxes, organizing elections, providing services such as waste management, and planning rules for new developments. Minnesota's counties vary in size, with the largest, Hennepin County (which contains the city of Minneapolis), having a population of 1,150,000 people, and the smallest, Traverse County, having a population of only 3,500.

Minnesota's cities have their own governments, too. There are two main types of city: the home-rule charter city and the statutory city. Home-rule charter cities can decide whatever model of government they wish to have. They have varying combinations of mayor, city manager, and city council. Statutory cities most commonly have a council and an elected mayor. All city governments are responsible for running emergency services such as fire and police departments, managing the city's water and sewer systems, and managing parks and other amenities. Some cities also provide other services such as running hospitals and even providing an airport.

## Government Interactions

Each branch of Minnesota's state government has a specific role. Each also works closely with the other two branches to balance one another. But the entire state government also works with the larger federal government and smaller local governments. Each layer works to represent and serve constituents in different ways.

The federal government establishes many laws and programs that states are tasked with implementing. In some cases, states must also pay for these required programs. In other instances, the federal government funds programs that are implemented at the state and local levels. For example, money is provided by the federal Department of Agriculture to support farming in Minnesota. Agencies such as the Federal Emergency Management


**In 2011, representatives from FEMA met with officials in Hennepin County to provide relief for Minnesotans affected by a tornado.**

Agency (FEMA) may also work with local and state agencies to provide disaster relief. These programs are funded in large part by federal taxes.

On any given day, citizens interact with all levels of government. They drive from a local road to a county road, onto a state highway or federal interstate. They drink water that is regulated by agencies at all levels to make sure it is clean and safe.

## Tribal Sovereignty and Tribal Government

Today, eleven independent tribal nations exist within Minnesota's borders. After being forced from their land and signing treaties that were broken, the Dakota and Anishinaabe are now **sovereign**. This means they have some rights to govern themselves and their people, within their reservations. They are still subject to many federal laws, but the federal government also provides recognized tribes with funding and protection. However, more than two hundred tribes in the United States are not recognized. These unrecognized tribes do not receive anything from the federal government.

**Vocabulary**

**sovereign**, adj. having control over one's own people, territory, and economy

Before recognition by the federal government, the Dakota and Anishinaabe were in an unstable legal situation that changed from one treaty to another. Ten percent of all treaties with Indigenous tribes signed by the U.S. government were with these two tribes. All those treaties were broken. Finally, in 1963, the state established the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council. It officially recognized the eleven

nations that make up the Dakota and Anishinaabe peoples in Minnesota (each has their own reservation) and still works to protect their sovereignty.


**Among other traditions, young members of the Mdewakanton Dakota participate in a semi-annual wacipi, which is a celebration of life. The dances still hold sacred meaning, but participants now also compete for prize money.**

Each of those eleven tribes is responsible for its own internal affairs. The Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community, for example, maintains all its own land. This includes its infrastructure, such as roads, sewers, and housing. It has a General Council that includes all members of the tribe who are at least eighteen years old. The tribe also includes an elected Business Council, which is the voice of the tribe. The council helps protect the tribe's sovereignty and ensure that the actions of the Mdewakanton are in line with its principles. This includes being good stewards of Earth and being rooted in tradition. For example, the Mdewakanton have built a bison sanctuary on 165 acres of their tribal land.

## Citizens and Residents

Whether you are part of an Indigenous tribe, a descendant of an early European settler, someone who has descended from immigrants, or a recent immigrant yourself, you are still a part of the state of Minnesota.

The population of Minnesota includes a wide variety of people. Those born here become citizens at birth, regardless of their parents' origins or how long their parents have lived in the United States. The Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution states: "All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States." This principle is known as birthright citizenship. The same citizenship clause of the amendment states that all **naturalized** people are also citizens. People who are naturalized were born somewhere else but have met the requirements to become citizens of the United States. These requirements include living in the country for a certain number of years, passing a test, and taking an **oath**.

**Vocabulary**

**naturalized**, adj. having been admitted to the citizenship of a country

**oath**, n. an official promise

**alien**, n. a person living in a country where they were not born

Other people live in Minnesota who are not citizens of the United States but are legal residents. People who live in a place where they are not citizens are called **aliens**. Resident aliens have lived in the United States lawfully for at least a year and typically have a "green card," an official government document that states they are a legal resident and permitted to live and work in the country.

Some people are citizens of more than one country at a time. People with dual nationality or dual citizenship are citizens of more than one country. If a person who is a citizen of the United States has a child in another country, that child may have citizenship both to the United States and the country in which they were born. People may also choose to have dual nationality based on their family of origin.

**One way for a person to eventually become a U.S. citizen is to join the military. Minnesota National Guard Private Ali Mohamed Dahir of Minneapolis took the oath of citizenship on June 29, 2016, in St. Paul. He came to the United States at age five as a refugee from Somalia.**

While the United States does allow for dual nationality, such citizens must carry a U.S. passport if they wish to enter or leave the country.

## Civic Participation

Adult citizens have certain responsibilities. These include voting in elections, paying taxes, and serving on a jury if asked to do so. Being a responsible citizen means taking an interest in issues that affect the world, the country, and one's local area and using votes and voices to make change where it is needed. Serving on a jury provides an essential service to our legal system and ensures that the people are always a part of any judgment about crime and punishment. Taxes ensure that governments have the money

needed to run essential services and infrastructure, to provide support to those who need it, and to respond to emergencies.

No matter where they came from, everyone who lives in Minnesota has a duty to participate in the community. You do not need to be old enough to vote. You do not need to be an adult. You do not even have to be a citizen! You can still make a big difference.

Everyone who lives in Minnesota can help those around them. This includes projects like helping keep public areas clean and safe. You can volunteer on a cleanup day or just safely pick up trash when you see it. You can also be part of larger community organizations that work to help others and keep your town safe and welcoming. You can even appeal directly to your local, state, or federal government if you want something to change.

One of the most important things anyone can do is be an **upstander**. Anyone who does something to help another person or group of people is an upstander. When you speak up about bullying, you are being an upstander. But you do not have to know someone personally to be an upstander. If someone says something that is unkind, you can say something. Standing up for your neighbors, even the ones you do not know, can make a huge difference in your community.

**Vocabulary**

**upstander**, n. a person who helps someone else who is being harmed

**Everyone has a responsibility to help take care of their community. Young people can work with trusted adults to get new civic projects started.**

# Chapter 11
# Minnesota's Economy

**Big Question**

How does Minnesota's economy work?

## The Ups and Downs of Budgets

In December 2024, the state of Minnesota projected it would have a $616 million **budget** surplus. This is the amount left over after all payments have been made. Just a few months later, that surplus shrank to $456 million. This means that the state was scheduled to spend more money than expected. If Minnesota continued spending at its current rate, it would soon have a deficit, or negative balance, of nearly $6 billion. Legislators in the state would have to make some tough decisions.

**Vocabulary**

**budget**, n. an amount of money available for spending based on a plan for how it will be spent

State legislatures often have to decide which citizen needs are most important. Families often have to do the same thing. It might be nice to take a vacation. That's not always possible if there isn't enough money for basic needs. Some families want to be able to make big investments like buying a house. But they might not have the money to do that.

Budgeting is about money—making it, spending it, saving it, lending it, and borrowing it. From individuals to companies and governments, good budgeting can help people meet their goals.

Regardless of how big or small they are, every government and household needs to think about how it spends money.

If a household budget comes up short, its members can choose to use credit cards or other short-term loans. Businesses also use budgets to make sure they can pay their employees, taxes, and other expenses. They can also rely on loans if they need to. But governments do not always have that flexibility. The state of Minnesota's constitution requires it to have a balanced budget every two years. The legislature is unable to end a session until it finds a way to balance the budget.

For a state or federal government, sticking to a budget might mean having to decide which programs or employees to let go. In Minnesota, legislators can dip into a reserve fund if they need to, similar to household budgets using money from a savings account. They can also decide which programs should no longer be funded. If they do not reach an agreement, the governor can extend their session until they are able to balance the state's budget.

## Minnesota's Economy

The flour mills that put Minneapolis on the map still contribute greatly to Minnesota's economy. In fact, manufacturing is still the state's top industry. Companies such as General Mills and Pillsbury still provide many of Minnesota's jobs. Other manufacturing now plays a role as well. Minnesota companies such as 3M and Medtronic are innovators in new technology. Overall, the state has the second-largest workforce in medical device manufacturing in the nation.

Manufacturing in Minnesota once relied almost entirely on the river for power. Today, companies no longer rely on the river for power, but many still use it as a commercial thoroughfare. From ports such as Red Wing and Winona, Minnesotan companies move goods and other products up and down the river. In the year 2019, Minnesota moved 3.6 million tons of grain down the river. Other waterways, such as Lake Superior, are still used to move taconite from the Iron Range. Huge ships called lakers carry millions of tons of materials from Minnesota through the Great Lakes and out to the Atlantic Ocean.


**Medtronic, headquartered in Shoreview, Minnesota, was the first company to create a battery-powered pacemaker to help regulate patients' heartbeats. Founded as a humble electronic repair business, Medtronic is now the world's leading medical device manufacturer.**

Minnesota is also home to seventeen of the nation's Fortune 500 companies. That means that seventeen of the country's 500 largest employers are based in Minnesota. One of those companies is C.H. Robinson. It coordinates how goods are transported around the world. Others, such as Ecolab, operate on an international level. Minnesota is also friendly to small, homegrown businesses. More than twenty thousand new businesses opened from March 2022 to March 2023.

From small startups to Fortune 500 companies, Minnesota affects markets at the community, national, and global levels.

The state government also affects how those companies operate. Recent legislation, such as required sick leave and stricter wage protections for construction workers, benefit employees. But they also cost employers, including small businesses and schools, more money.

The state government also has an impact on how commercial land is used in Minnesota. Agencies such as the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) assess how state projects impact the natural environment. Organizations such as the Metropolitan Council oversee the planning of Minnesota's highways and rail lines. The council is also in charge of determining how land will be used to support the airports. These two transportation agencies work together to help support Minnesota's economy. Other state agencies often work together on such projects, though they are sometimes at odds. In 1956, MnDOT—then called the Minnesota Highway Department—wanted to tear down part of Fort Snelling to build a new highway to the airport. Governor Orville Freeman suggested they build a tunnel instead. This tunnel project became the first major effort to preserve historic Fort Snelling.

## The Government and the Economy

The state of Minnesota controls other land use as well. In the 2024 legislative session, the state **allocated** more land for state parks, such as Banning and Lake Louise. It also returned all state-owned land within

**Vocabulary**

**allocate**, v. to distribute for a purpose

Upper Sioux Agency State Park to the Upper Sioux Community of the Dakota nation.

This land management is just one way Minnesota's government influences the economy. The state brings in funds through taxes and fees. This income helps pay for programs such as state parks, highways, and essential public services.

One of the most important roles of the government is to fund education. On average, a relatively small percentage of school funding comes from the federal Department of Education. Less affluent school districts rely on it the most. In the 2020s, overall, Minnesota public schools received over 10 percent of their funding from the U.S. government. States such as Minnesota rely on the funding to ensure that all students receive a quality public education. Still, most school funding comes from the state and local communities. Each year, the state determines how much it will provide public school districts for each enrolled student. The number increases slightly each year. But it is still sometimes not enough for school districts to cover all their expenses. About 20 percent of the balance comes from local property taxes. This means that school districts with higher property taxes typically have schools that are better funded.

School districts cannot choose to move to another location. But private businesses can. Minnesota ranks first in the United States for business survival. This means it has the highest percentage of businesses that last at least five years. Many have lasted a century or more. Advantages such as a strong infrastructure and quality of life also make Minnesota a desirable location for new businesses.

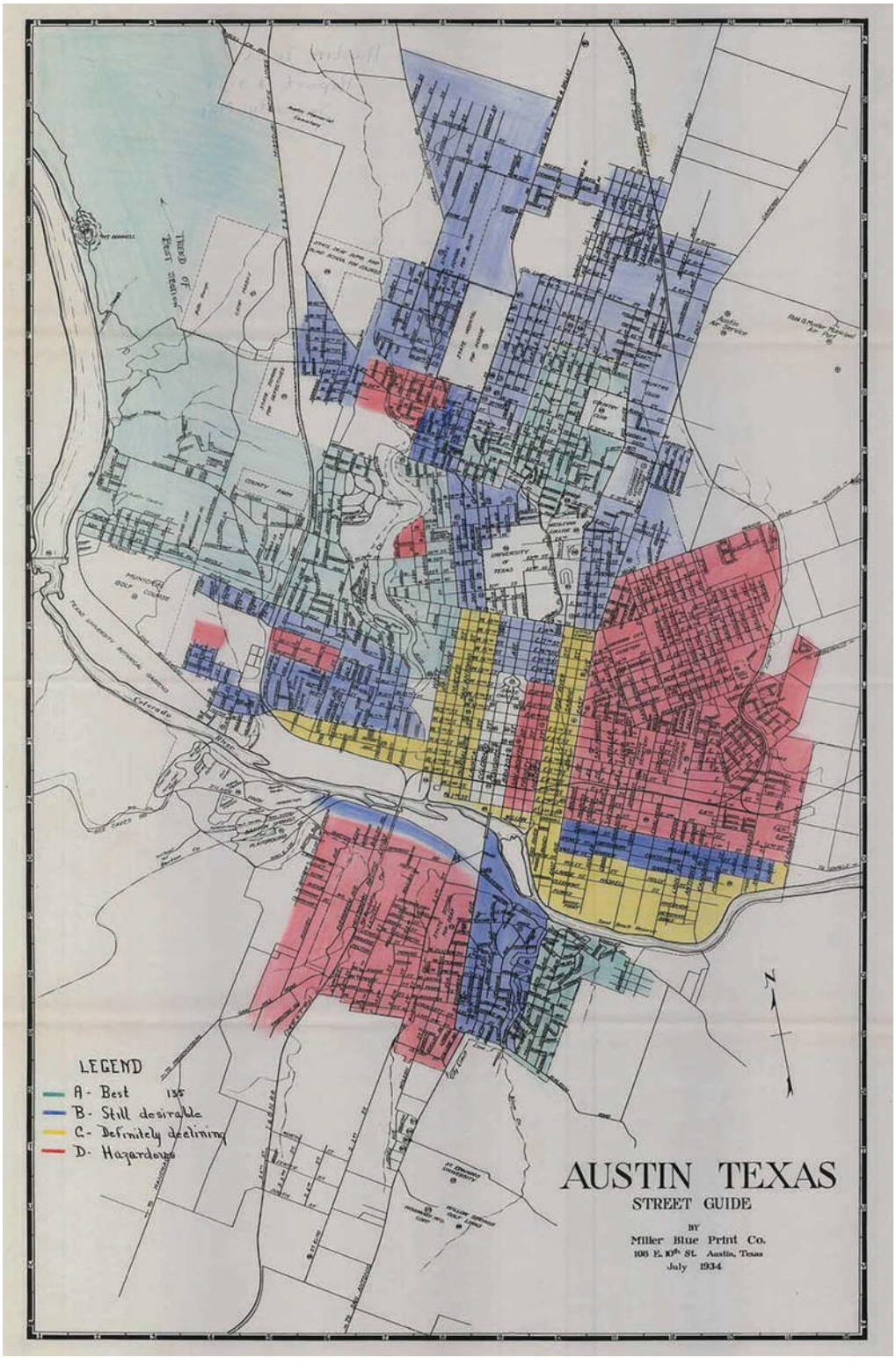
**The 2024 legislative session in Minnesota saw the largest increase in years of the amount of money that the state spends on education. But it also passed mandates that ended up being more expensive for many school districts.**

## Economic Inequalities

Sometimes, unpredictable circumstances can make finances more challenging. Partly because of the income gap that many Black Minnesotans have faced for generations, financial security presents a greater challenge for them.

Home ownership is considered a marker of financial security. It is also one way to build generational wealth, or wealth that is passed from one generation to another. Generational wealth can break the cycle of poverty that prevents people from being able to go to college or start their own business. But Black Minnesotans historically faced policies and practices that blocked them from owning their own homes.

While Minnesota has one of the highest rates of homeownership in the country, it also has one of the biggest racial gaps. In 2020,




**This redlined map is similar to maps across the country from the 1930s. The neighborhoods in red are labeled "hazardous" and therefore would not qualify for a home loan. From 1934 to 1968, 98 percent of all federal home loans were given to white families.**

three out of four white families owned their home. Just one out of four Black families did. In 2021, families who owned their own home had an average net worth of about $300,000. The net worth of those who rented was only $8,000. These gaps did not appear overnight. In fact, they have been compounding for more than a hundred years.

In the early twentieth century, new housing developments included racial covenants. These agreements prevented any families of color from moving into those neighborhoods. Traditionally Black neighborhoods like the Rondo in St. Paul emerged as a result. By the 1930s, banks began a practice called **redlining**. They circled those Black neighborhoods with a red line, marking them as inherently more dangerous. Banks consider loans in dangerous areas to be high-risk, so they typically do not grant mortgages for homes in such neighborhoods. The combination of racial covenants and redlining effectively made it impossible for Black households to purchase a home. Over generations, this created significant and systemic inequalities.

**Vocabulary**

**redline**, v. to refuse to grant a housing or business loan because the property is in an area deemed to be high-risk

Despite the many challenges and roadblocks, there is hope for Black Minnesotans. The African American Leadership Forum focuses on the root problems of racism in Minnesota by addressing inequalities like homeownership. It advocates for policies in education and economics that will give Black Minnesotans a fair opportunity to grow generational wealth. The forum also works

with lawmakers to address these issues on a state-wide level. The Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity organization is also working to help Black families become homeowners. Its Advancing Black Homeownership Program is meant to help provide homes for Foundational Black Americans, or those descended from enslaved Africans. It also attempts to reverse the consequences of redlining with a loan program of its own, built specifically for economically disadvantaged groups.

Financial security has been an ongoing challenge for Indigenous households, too. In 2021, the gap in homeownership between white and Indigenous families in Minnesota was the fourth-largest in the country. While many Dakota and Anishinaabe do not live on reservations, the treaties that forced them onto reservations robbed them of the land that could have provided generational wealth. Policies that followed left them even poorer. Rates of poverty among Indigenous Americans—regardless of where they live—are the highest of any ethnic or racial group in the country. Indigenous Minnesotans are four times as likely to be living in poverty compared to white Minnesotans.

The state is also working to level the playing field for Indigenous Minnesotans. For example, the Minnesota Office of Higher Education offers grants to students with a Native American background to help them attend college. The Tribal Nation Aid program provides $35 million a year of state money to the eleven recognized tribes in Minnesota. The first such payment was made in 2024. If these programs and others like them succeed, the future will be much brighter for all Minnesotans.

# Glossary

## A

**affluent, adj.** having a great deal of money; wealthy [114]

**alien, n.** a person living in a country where they were not born [134]

**allocate, v.** to distribute for a purpose [142]

**appeal, v.** to apply to a higher court for a reversal of the decision of a lower court [125]

## B

**biome, n.** an ecological community defined by plants, animals, and climate [7]

**budget, n.** an amount of money available for spending based on a plan for how it will be spent [138]

## C

**communist, adj.** relating to communism, an economic system based on community ownership of property and industry [99]

**commute, v.** to reduce or eliminate the punishment for a crime [74]

**confluence, n.** a coming or flowing together [39]

**coniferous, adj.** relating to trees with needles and cones [7]

**contiguous, adj.** sharing a common border; next to each other [4]

**covenant, n.** an official agreement [83]

## D

**deciduous, adj.** relating to trees that shed their leaves each year [7]

**deflation, n.** a decrease in the cost of goods and services [87]

**disparity, n.** a difference in levels that is often considered to be unfair [112]

**drainage, n.** the removal of water from a place [12]

## E

**encroach, v.** to intrude on something that belongs to someone else [43]

**executive, adj.** having the power to carry out and enforce laws [124]

## G

**glacier, n.** a large, slow-moving mass of compacted snow or ice [5]

**greenhouse gas emissions (phrase)** substances that are released into the air that trap heat from the sun in Earth's atmosphere [114]

## I

**infrastructure, n.** the public works system that includes roads, bridges, water, public transportation, etc. [37]

**inhabitant, n.** a person who lives in a place [2]

**integrate, v.** to end a policy that keeps apart people of different races; to make a place open to everyone [83]

**irrigation, n.** the watering of crops by moving water from a well, river, or lake to a place where it does not rain enough to grow crops [12]

## J

**judicial, adj.** having the power to decide questions of law [125]

## K

**kinship, n.** close blood relationship [25]

## L

**legislative, adj.** having the power to make laws [47]

**linguist, n.** a person skilled in foreign languages [97]

## M

**median, n.** the middle number in a set of sorted numbers [112]

**monopoly, n.** complete ownership or control of a resource or industry [81]

## N

**naturalized, adj.** having been admitted to the citizenship of a country [134]

## O

**oath, n.** an official promise [134]

**override, v.** to use one's authority to reject or cancel [127]

**overturn, v.** to reverse a previous decision [75]

## P

**petroglyph, n.** a prehistoric rock carving [22]

**portage, v.** to carry a boat and its cargo from one navigable waterway to another [32]

**prairie, n.** a large area of flat land covered in grasses [7]

**prominent, adj.** very important; famous [33]

## R

**ration, n.** a fixed amount of a resource officially allowed to each person during a time of shortage, often in wartime [98]

**reconciliation, n.** restoration of a broken relationship [64]

**redline, v.** to refuse to grant a housing or business loan because the property is in an area deemed to be high-risk [146]

**refugee, n.** a person who has been forced to leave their country in order to escape war, persecution, or natural disaster [16]

**relinquish, v.** to give up something voluntarily [42]

**repudiate, v.** to reject or refuse [64]

**retribution, n.** punishment inflicted as vengeance for a wrongdoing [73]

## S

**sacred, adj.** related to religion; holy [22]

**secede, v.** to withdraw formally from an alliance or organization [57]

**segregate, v.** to keep people separate, usually on the basis of race [83]

**sovereign, adj.** having control over one's own people, territory, and economy [132]

**suffrage, n.** the right to vote [81]

## T

**thoroughfare, n.** a road or path that forms a route between two or more places [79]

## U

**upstander, n.** a person who helps someone else who is being harmed [136]

## V

**veto, v.** to reject or refuse to approve a law [124]


# CKHG™

## Core Knowledge History and Geography™

**Editorial Director**
Ilene Goldman

**Design Manager**
Ivan Pesic

## Subject Matter Expert

Rick L. Woten, Ph.D.

## Illustration and Photo Credits

Album / British Library / Alamy Stock Photo: 38

Allen Creative / Steve Allen / Alamy Stock Photo: 61

Alpha Stock / Alamy Stock Photo: 14, 82

Andre Jenny / Alamy Stock Photo: 10

Axis Images / Alamy Stock Photo: 27

CBW / Alamy Stock Photo: 63

ClassicStock / Alamy Stock Photo: 92–93

Clint Farlinger / Alamy Stock Photo: Cover I, 2–3, 18–19

Daniel Thornberg / Alamy Stock Photo: Cover B, 13

Darling Archive / Alamy Stock Photo: 56

David Grossman / Alamy Stock Photo: 105

David R. Frazier Photolibrary, Inc. / Alamy Stock Photo: 138–139

Dominique Braud / Dembinsky Photo Associates / Alamy / Alamy Stock Photo: 67

Don Smetzer / Alamy Stock Photo: 79

Eddie Rodriquez / Alamy Stock Photo: 129

Fran E.Q. Friesen / Alamy Stock Photo: Cover C, 76–77

Fur Traders in Canada by G. Hartwig, 1874 / Universal History Archive / UIG / Bridgeman Images: 36

Gaertner / Alamy Stock Photo: 30–31

GL Archive / Alamy Stock Photo: 97

Henryk Sadura / Alamy Stock Photo: 144

Heritage Image Partnership Ltd / Alamy Stock Photo: 25b, 87

Historic Images / Alamy Stock Photo: 70

incamerastock / Alamy Stock Photo: 57

Jim Parkin / Alamy Stock Photo: Cover D, 122–123

Jim West / Alamy Stock Photo: 109

Joe Ferrer / Alamy Stock Photo: 110–111

John Bingham / Alamy Stock Photo: 141

John Elk III / Alamy Stock Photo: 22

Jonathan Larsen / Diadem Images / Alamy Stock Photo: 6

Josh Mun / Alamy Stock Photo: Cover H, 119

Kristin Cato / Alamy Stock Photo: 17

Lake Itsaca, 1853 (colout litho) / Eastman, Captain Seth (1808–75) (after) / American / Newberry Library, Chicago, Illinois, USA / © Newberry Library / Bridgeman Images: Cover G, i, iii, 40–41

LE PICTORIUM / Alamy Stock Photo: 133

Maurice Savage / Alamy Stock Photo: 100

MET / BOT / Alamy Stock Photo: 35

Mide bag, Winnebago, c.1870 (mixed media) / American School, (19th century) / American / Detroit Institute of Arts, USA / © Detroit Institute of Arts / Bridgeman Images: 46

Mirtill Hagymasi / Alamy Stock Photo: 24

NB / FEMA / Alamy Stock Photo: 131

NB / FS / Alamy Stock Photo: 90

Niday Picture Library / Alamy Stock Photo: 72, 73

North Wind Picture Archives / Alamy Stock Photo: 26

Pavel Iukhimetc / Alamy Stock Photo: 137

Pavel Toczynski / Alamy Stock Photo: Cover F, 127

Peter Jacobson / Alamy Stock Photo: 115

Photo 12 / Alamy Stock Photo: 85

Piemags / PL Photography Limited / SuperStock: 34, 60

piemags / PL Photography Limited / SuperStock: 50, 59

PJF Military Collection / Alamy Stock Photo: 135

RBM Vintage Images / Alamy Stock Photo: 103

Rosanne Tackaberry / Alamy Stock Photo: 120

SBS Eclectic Images / Alamy Stock Photo: 58

Science History Images / Alamy Stock Photo: 104

Sergey Lazarev / Alamy Stock Photo: 25a

Sourced by Piemags / PL Photography Limited / SuperStock: Cover E, 52–53

Steve Skjold / Alamy Stock Photo: 84, 107, 117

Ted Small / Alamy Stock Photo: 96

The History Collection / Alamy Stock Photo: 44

The Photo Access / Alamy Stock Photo: 116

The Print Collector / Alamy Stock Photo: Cover A, 65

Underwood Archives, Inc / Alamy Stock Photo: 95

Zoom Historical / Alamy Stock Photo: 145

## Core Knowledge K–8 In Your State series

The In Your State series includes stand-alone units in science and history focused on individual states and aligned to state standards.
Units can be used in conjunction with the *Core Knowledge Sequence* or independently.

### In Your State series

History units in this series include

**Grade 3: The Story of Arizona**

**Grade 4: The Story of California**
**Grade 4: The Story of Colorado**
**Grade 4: The Story of North Carolina**
**Grade 4: The Story of Utah**

**Grade 6: The Story of Minnesota**

**Grade 7: The History of Utah**

**Grade 8: The History of North Carolina**

**www.coreknowledge.org**

ISBN: 979-8-88970-493-5